

PLUS CD-ROM 30 stylish web page templates, video lessons and more!

Adobe Photoshop

Creating Web Imagery

Discover the secrets of
successful online images



FocusGuide
From the makers of **Computer Arts**



132 pages of easy-to-follow tutorials and expert advice
to help develop your Adobe Photoshop skills



Blow away the cobwebs...

Create images that download quickly and look fantastic. Photoshop and ImageReady have all the tools you need...

Putting any kind of imagery online isn't as easy as just finding some webspace and uploading it. Web designers face a constant challenge to display graphics at the best possible quality while keeping the file size of their pages low. It's a top priority – after all, you don't want visitors to your web site waiting too long for the pages to download.

So thank heavens for Photoshop and its web content colleague ImageReady, which have a raft of options and features for ensuring your images are delivered at maximum speed and that they look awesome! These closely-linked programs can deal with every kind of image, from large top-quality illustrations to simple buttons and logos. Whatever you throw at them, it will come out the other side looking as good as ever, but with a file size suitable for any net connection.

Photoshop's web tools aren't just about squashing your images' file sizes. They also make it easier than ever to add all sorts of bells and whistles to your pages, such as rollover buttons and image maps. You can then export these to your web authoring software, slotting them into your pages with the minimum of fuss.

Throughout this Focus Guide we'll show you just how easy it can be to create images that really work in an online context, and how to create extra elements that will add some serious style to your site.

All the files you need to follow our tutorials can be found on the bonus CD-ROM, as well as illuminating video lessons and a trial version of Adobe's top web building software, GoLive.

Let's get going...





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Finding your way

Our handy icons hold the key to a wealth of additional information. Here's what they all mean...

With so much ground to cover on the vast subject of Web Imagery in this Focus Guide, it's been hard work fitting everything in. That's why you'll find the special icons that occupy the margins on each page so useful.

As you leaf through the pages, you'll find a range of eye-catching symbols, each of which indicates an extra nugget of knowledge. The icons enable you to identify exactly what kind of information you're dealing with – for a guide to icon

categories, see below. These handy hints and tips are always relevant to the topic that's being discussed, and will help you develop your Photoshop skills that little bit faster.

Our writers are always experienced Photoshop experts who regularly contribute to our sister magazines, such as *Computer Arts*, *Computer Arts Projects* and *Digital Camera Magazine*. So you can rest assured that all the information they provide is both authoritative and thoroughly tried and tested.



On your CD-ROM

Tutorial files, trial software and more besides is included on your CD-ROM. Every now and then we remind you of this by flagging up the disc icon and listing what's on it. Handy, eh?



Take note

You'll find a number of these nuggets of knowledge scattered throughout the Guide. They're crammed with useful information that complements the main text perfectly.



Top tips

This indicates an expert tip. Anything sheltered beneath this icon is guaranteed to reveal a useful tip, or advice about Photoshop's range of tools, options and features for web images.



Watch out!

The 'skull and crossbones' sign means proceed with caution. You'll find some important points outlined below this icon, which you should certainly take seriously.



Further information

We'd like to tell you absolutely everything, but there's just not enough space. Instead we refer you to other useful resources, such as websites and specialist books for further reading.



Links

When we refer to a website, we may pull out the web address in the sidebar to make it easier for you to read and remember.



Shortcuts

Carrying out common tasks again and again can get a little tedious. Our handy shortcuts show you how to carry out these tasks with a few deft key-presses, saving you lots of time and effort.

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Chapter 1

WEB CONCEPTS WITHIN PHOTOSHOP

In this chapter...

- ☐ Find out when to use the .JPG format
- ☐ Discover the options available to .GIFs
- ☐ Learn about the less-common .PNG format
- ☐ Optimise your images for display on the web
- ☐ Learn about web-safe colours and fonts
- ☐ Find out about copyright issues

Despite its origins as a photographic tool, Photoshop has evolved into the Swiss Army knife of production tools with strengths for all kinds of media, including web design...

Photoshop has long been known for offering key features to all kinds of creative artists, from photographers to graphic designers and – thanks to the all-new CS version – those working in video production. Web designers are also a core user group, especially since the release of version 5.5 in 1999. This release ushered in key features for web designers, such as the Save for Web feature and integration of ImageReady into the package.

But before we jump straight in to examine just how useful these tools can be for creating online content, it's important to understand a few crucial concepts inherent to the

medium. In short, we need to understand the the limitations of web-based work, before we can create effective online content.

Understanding HTML

Web sites can include a wide range of media formats, including video, audio and animation, but the core foundation for any web page is its text and graphical content.

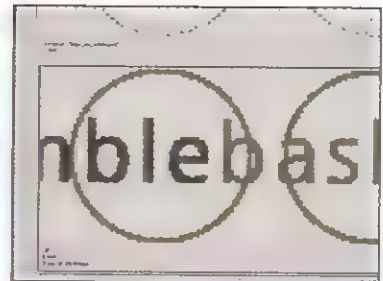
A web page is effectively a regular text file that contains tags defining the HTML mark-up language, which is then saved with a .htm or .html extension instead of .txt. HTML is a very easy language to understand, because its content is formatted by



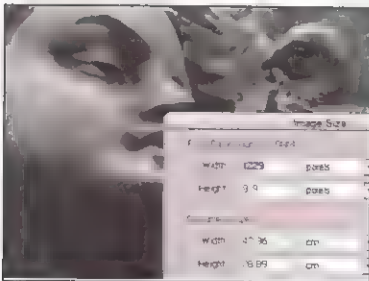
Page 12 Discover what kind of images can be displayed through your website



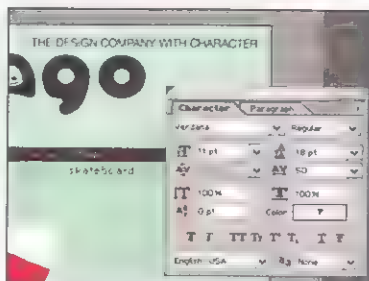
Page 13 For photo-real imagery you'll need to know how the .JPG format works



Page 14 .GIF files can be transparent or animated, and are best for simple images



Page 16 It's all a question of size – the smaller your image files the better



Page 17 Ensure your colours and fonts will be available as you intended



Page 19 Present your artwork to the world, but protect your copyright

surrounding it with bracketed tabs. For example, **** would indicate text to be rendered in bold type.

These tags are generally presented in pairs with the closing tag defined by a forward-slash. The following code, for example, translates the word 'web' into bold text: **web**.

To embed an image into a web page all that's necessary is a line of code that tells the web browser where the image file is located, with related attributes that reveal its dimensions and positioning.

Streamlining images

However, as anyone with even the slightest experience of using the

internet will know, the delivery of web-based content is influenced greatly by the 'bandwidth' of the internet connection on which it's viewed. It's therefore important to understand which types of image work best online and how to prepare your images for delivery. So before we dive into Photoshop's deep end, we need to get to grips with some basic concepts, which we'll look at over the following pages. We're using Adobe Photoshop 7.0 as the basis for this Focus Guide but many of the options and features that we cover will be relevant to earlier versions, as well as the very latest CS release.

File formats

Knowing what kinds of images work best within a web page is crucial...



Vector animations

SWF files can only be effectively created within Macromedia Flash itself. Photoshop has no direct support for the vector format, although ImageReady CS can export to the format. Your files can then be imported into the animation package.

Despite the huge number of image formats available to Photoshop, there are effectively only two kinds of image that can be used within a web page. The .JPG and .GIF format are by far the most commonly used, although .PNG is also supported. We'll look into these in turn during the next few pages.

There are alternative methods of embedding visual elements into a web page. For example, you could make use of Macromedia Flash to create animated content in the SWF format. But generally speaking,



A typical website will use graphics not just for illustration, but also to define the general look and feel of the site.

when you see an image displayed on the web it's more than likely to be in the .JPG or .GIF format.



Alternative text

The majority of a web page's copy should be rendered as regular HTML text, although graphics can be used to create titles. If you choose to use graphics for some text elements, make sure you include alternative text titles from within your web building software. This makes the graphic identifiable and accessible to users who may require screen readers.

WEB GRAPHIC FORMATS

THE .JPG format is one of the main image formats used on the web for displaying imagery, such as photographs or more complex design elements with variable tone.

.GIF is used for flatter images that tend to contain solid colour or text. It has the advantage of supporting transparency and animation options.

THE .PNG format was introduced to replace the .GIF format but, although it provides a number of advantages, it never really took over the mantle from its more established rival.

BASIC ANIMATIONS may be contained within animated .GIFs, but more complex vector animations can be presented via the Flash SWF format.

THERE ARE a handful of other methods of including imagery in web pages, but these will generally rely on plug-in technologies and should be avoided for routine design elements.

The .JPG format

It's the most popular image format on the web, so it's important to realise when to use it

Along with the .GIF format which we'll look at overleaf, the .JPG format accounts for the vast majority of the graphic content found online. Both have their particular strengths but the .JPG is the one to use for imagery that's composed of a wide range of colours and detailed graduations, and particularly for photographs.

The .JPG format complements the strengths of the .GIF format, because its compression methods allow far more complex images to be successfully reduced in file size.

Lots of data is removed from the image, but the content that's left behind is still easily recognisable to the human eye.

This 'lossy' method of compression means that images inevitably lose a little quality, but the format has the advantage of supporting variable levels of compression to get the most balanced results. Nonetheless, if you're saving a file as a .JPG, be sure to save the output as a new file, otherwise your original high-quality file will be overwritten.



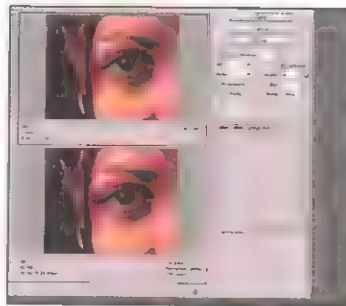
Strike a balance

Although the .JPG format is ideal for photographic content and some incredibly small file sizes can be achieved, you'll need to be careful when reducing imagery. The most obvious sign of over-compression is the appearance of a halo effect around any apparent edges, so keep an eye out for these and alter the compression settings accordingly.

COMPARING .JPG TO .GIF

Nothing squashes a photographic image like a .JPG

Although the .GIF format is capable of rendering more complex imagery, doing so will generate much higher file sizes when compared with .JPG. The variations shown here look identical, although we've managed to get this 300x225 pixel image down to little over 6kb as a .JPG, compared to just under 43kb for the .GIF. Although the final size of both images is very low, you shouldn't forget that a complex page will often contain multiple images, which can slow down the delivery of your page if the correct compression methods are ignored. We could reduce the .GIF further, but this would result in reduced colour content and a marked loss in quality.



There is little difference in quality between the upper .JPG and lower .GIF versions, other than the file size

Graphics Interchange Format

For images that contain flat colours and sharp contrast, the .GIF is the format of choice



Indexed colour

To fully appreciate the savings to be made in the .GIF format in terms of file size, the exported image needs to be indexed. This involves embedding colour information into the graphic to determine the range of options available. By indexing the file, unnecessary colour data is removed to create the optimised image.

The .GIF format makes the perfect foil for the .JPG, because the LZW compression method it uses is more suited to larger regions filled with fewer colours, such as the typical web button or title graphic.

.GIF compression works by cleverly abandoning colours from the image's final image colour table to reduce the file size without adversely affecting the image quality. With certain image content it therefore becomes possible to bring the colour content right down

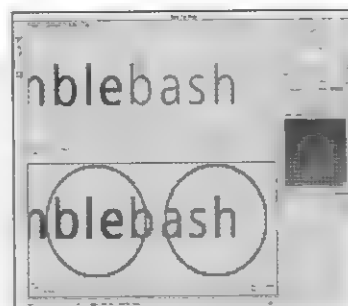
to four or eight colours, stripping out any unnecessary data to leave only those required by the image content.

One additional advantage of the format over its .JPG cousin is its ability to support transparency, which helps to blend a .GIF image into the background of a complex web page. However, to achieve this convincingly you'll need to consider the 'matting' around the pixel content, which helps blend the subject into its background. We'll look at this on page 34, when we use Photoshop's Save for Web feature.

.GIF87A OR .GIF89A?

So you thought a .GIF was a .GIF? Think again...

CompuServe developed the original .GIF specification – .GIF87a – in 1987, but the updated .GIF89a came along just two years later. The newer format has now taken over to the degree that most graphics programs will now default to the more flexible 89a version, which supports transparency, animation and 'interlacing'. Interlacing is a useful feature for web graphics – especially if you're using a slow connection – because it allows a low-resolution version of an image to be seen while the full image loads. Animated .GIFs cannot be made using Photoshop itself, but we'll look at their creation using its built-in sister application, ImageReady, in chapter 8.



The newer version of the .GIF format makes it possible to use transparency within online graphical elements

Portable Network Graphics

The new kid on the file format block is still nowhere near as popular as its rivals...

The Portable Network Graphic format (.PNG), pronounced 'ping', was developed as a patent-free alternative to the .GIF file type back in 1995, when CompuServe and Unisys, who developed the older .GIF format, decided to enforce royalty payments on applications that implemented the LZW compression method.

As a result the .PNG format emerged but, despite showing many advantages over the older method, has only enjoyed marginal success. In contrast to the 8-bit .GIF, .PNG

supports both 8 and 24-bit images, resulting in a format that enjoys the advantages of both .JPG's colour depth and .GIF's lossless compression processes.

These variants became known as .PNG-8, which compares with the older .GIF format while the .PNG-24 method has closer ties to the .JPG. The latter results in a noticeably larger files size for exported files, but has a distinct advantage over both .JPG and .GIF formats through its support for up to 256 levels of transparency within an image.



.PNG

The Portable Network Graphics format was developed as an Open-Source project. For more information about the format take a look at this site:

www.libpng.org/pub/png

.PNG LIMITATIONS

It's not all as good as it sounds...

Despite the obvious benefits behind the .PNG format, there are some issues you should be aware of before making extensive use of it. The format generally creates marginally larger file sizes when compared to .GIF, although this in itself is negligible. The main issue related to the format however is browser compatibility. If you know that some of your site's audience is using web browsers prior to the 4.0 generation, then you'll run into problems – these older browsers simply will not recognise the newer format. However, as the vast majority of users are now using sixth-generation browsers, the problem is becoming less apparent.



.PNG-8 files are comparable to .GIF. Here the .GIF version weighs in at 2.9kb and the .PNG file at 3.3kb

What is image optimisation?

Creating images of the highest quality while keeping the file size low is imperative online



How big is too big?

You need to consider that a web page often contains multiple images, all of which increase the potential download time for your page. Keeping the overall combined file size to below 50kb would be ideal, although an upper limit of 100kb should be thought of as a ceiling for your content.

The phrase ‘image optimisation’ is often mentioned when creating graphics for use on the internet, and without due consideration you run the risk of creating image files that are too large to be delivered effectively. Generally, what is implied is a simple reduction in image quality to dramatically reduce the file size of an image. This makes your assets faster to download, meaning they will reach the viewer’s screen with minimal disruption or delay.

Fortunately, since Photoshop 5.5

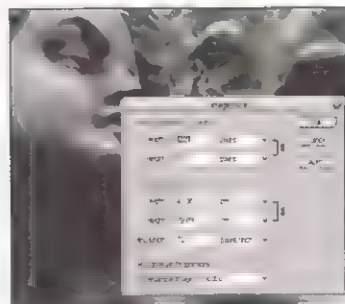
and the introduction of the Save for Web feature, the optimising process has become so simple that all the hard work is done for you. No need for complicated algorithms – the tool converts your imagery to the best settings with just a little assistance.

We’ll be looking at the Save for Web feature in more detail throughout Chapter 3, which is dedicated to this labour-saving tool. Remember the basic concepts of whether an image is more suited to the .GIF or .JPG format and half the job will already be done for you!

IMAGE RESOLUTION

Reduce your images by lowering the number of pixels per inch

Just as compression methods and colour content can affect an image’s file size, so too can the resolution it supports. If you’re working in print you should be outputting your work at around 300dpi, but this is too detailed for online viewing. The typical monitor can only render images at 72dpi, so anything above that will only bloat your file size. As well as providing smaller file sizes, a lower resolution also ensures that people can’t hijack your images for printing. Again, Save for Web will automatically reduce the resolution for you, but by working directly within the constraints of the resolution you’ll get a better idea of how your final designs will appear.



You can manually change the resolution of an image through the Image > Image Size dialog settings

Web-safe colours

Make sure your colours appear as intended across all browser and platform combinations

Another crucial factor to consider when planning your online design is how accurately your colours are represented to the end user. There are certain advantages with designing for screens rather than print, not least that you can see how your layout will appear without worrying about resolution issues and colour modes. However, there are also problems raised, because you can't control the circumstances in which your site will be viewed.

Different browsers, versions and computer platforms have a different

understanding of colour profiles, which can greatly influence your site. You may have your graphics card set up to display millions of colours, but what happens when someone tries to access your site using the basic 256-colour palette?

In such instances, the browser will attempt to recreate colours that fall outside its range by 'dithering' colour – invariably resulting in ugly, speckled results. To counter this keep the Only Web Colours option checked in Photoshop's Color Picker and use only the colours on offer.



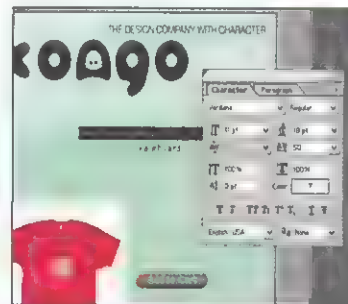
Dithering

Dithering is used when a colour contained within an image falls outside a computer's colour range. To counter this, the nearest colours either side of the problem colour will be rendered in a pixel-sized chequerboard to attempt to trick the eye into seeing what was originally intended.

WEB-SAFE FONTS

HTML text can only be rendered using certain typefaces...

Just as you should aim to keep colours consistent across various browser/platform combinations, so too should you think about text. It's no good designing an HTML page using a fancy hand-scripted font if you are the only person with the font installed. Web browsers recreate HTML pages by making use of the fonts present on the viewer's system. So keep things simple by designing HTML text using Arial, Verdana or Geneva for san-serif fonts, Times Roman and Georgia for serif copy and Courier for monospace text. Any text outside of these base fonts should be converted to a graphic format first, but limit this to titles and headers only.



Keep in mind that your regular text should be created using a font that's available across multiple platforms

Anti-aliasing explained

Bewildered by blocky pixels? Let anti-aliasing fill the gaps and smooth things over for you...

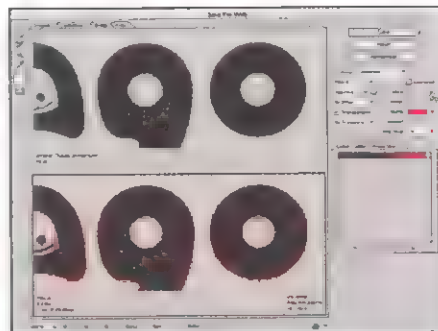


Removing anti-aliasing

There may be occasions when you are given an image that already has anti-aliasing applied, but for a different colour background than you require. In such a case you can make use of the Layer > Matting > Defringe option to shave outlining pixels from your image.

Bitmap imagery comprises of individual square pixels, so it's inevitable that curved shapes may appear a little blocky. Graphics applications will generally get around this using 'anti-aliasing'. Using this method blocky areas are filled with coloured pixels that blend the foreground and background colours, tricking the eye into seeing a smooth curve.

The effect is automatically applied to graphic elements in most cases, but when working with text you have the option of using various degrees



Anti-aliasing shows up around the edges of the bottom file as a red fringe, which has been determined by the Matte options in Save for Web

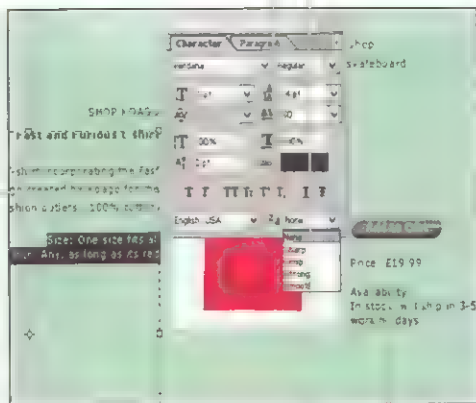
of anti-aliasing. You can recreate the appearance of HTML text in your designs by switching anti-aliasing off.

CONTROLLING ANTI-ALIASING

The Anti-aliasing options for the Text tool can be found toward the bottom-right of the Character palette.

With anti-aliasing switched off you can use Photoshop to emulate your final HTML-based text. Just remember that it should be created using a web-safe font.

The remaining options will apply anti-aliasing to varying degrees, which is better suited for text that will ultimately be converted into a graphic, such as page titles, headers and so on.



Here you can choose a web-safe font from which to mock up text that will ultimately be code. Choose the None option from the Anti-aliasing options.

When done correctly, you can easily add text to graphic elements such as buttons or site navigation to remain consistent with HTML text.

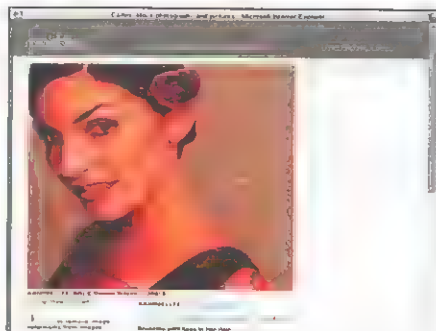
With anti-aliasing applied the end result may take on an appearance that cannot be replicated by your browser effectively.

Protecting your images online

Copyright issues are important to all artists, but online limitations will help you sleep easier

If you're planning to present your own photography or artwork online, you'll undoubtedly be aware of issues regarding the protection of your work. Copyright is a sensitive subject and you don't want just anyone to download and use your work without getting your rightful recognition or payment.

Fortunately, the limitations of the internet as a means of delivering such material make it very difficult to present anything of much use. As long as you make note of a few common sense details you won't



Take note of how stock image libraries present their wares online to pick up some tricks on protecting your own web-based work

have to worry about finding your work plastered across billboards without your permission.



Right-click myth

One of the quickest ways to save an online image is via your right mouse button. To counter this, many sites make use of JavaScript to disable the normal right-click menu. However, this isn't a very effective method: if you can see an image it can still be copied via a screen grab or from your browser cache.

REASONS NOT TO WORRY

THE 72DPI resolution at which your images are available online is far too low to be successfully used in print. A higher resolution is wasted online and will lead to increased image file sizes and slower downloads.

THE PHYSICAL dimensions of a typical web graphic is too small for anything other than screen-based design. As long as your image gives a reasonable indication of the quality, then leave reduced versions online and encourage users to contact you if they really need full-size originals.

ADDING A watermark over larger images provides a simple method of making your online images useless to anyone other than yourself. Check out stock image library websites to get some idea how this can be done.

IF YOU'RE still nervous about the prospect, then consider subscribing to services such as Digimark, who will monitor copies of your images. Check out the Filters > Digimark option to get started.



Browser cache

A web browser contains a folder in which are stored temporary copies of web pages and images that you've visited online. This speeds up the browsing process by presenting local versions of such files instead of downloading duplicates.

INTRODUCING PHOTOSHOP'S WEB TOOLS

Photoshop provides a number of tools and features aimed specifically at the web designer. There's not quite as many as you might expect, but then there's a good reason for that...

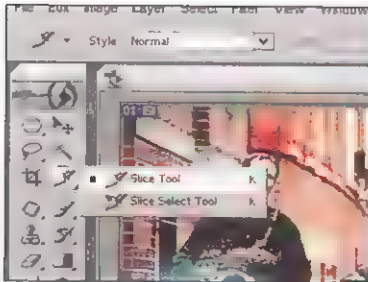
As you might expect from a program called 'Photoshop', the core strengths of the application lie in working with photographs and other bitmap imagery. However, over the years and from version to version, new features were quick to attract a wide-ranging user base that now extends far beyond its original target audience.

Graphic designers, print bureaus, video producers, in fact anyone who has anything to do with bitmap imagery has now found their own uses for the program. Adobe has managed to cater for them all, without making the software too complex for any specialised group.

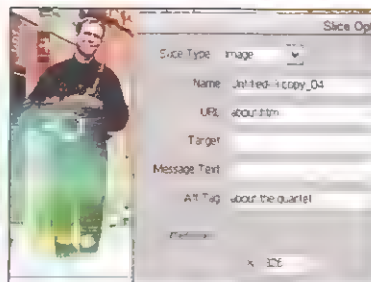
Photoshop for web designers

And of course, web designers are no exception, but it wasn't until Photoshop 5.5 was released – in the middle of the web design 'gold rush' – that the program made itself more available to screen-based designers. The additions to this version weren't as apparent as you might expect. The only addition was a solitary new tool, plus a small collection of related features that were arguably of more interest to the casual user rather than the pro web designer.

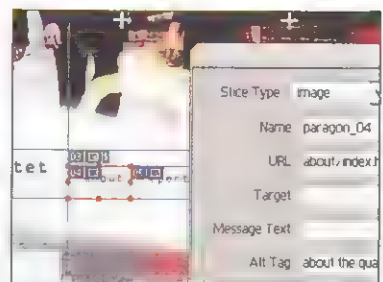
The reason for such reluctant change within Photoshop is clear when you think back to the large user base the software has attracted.



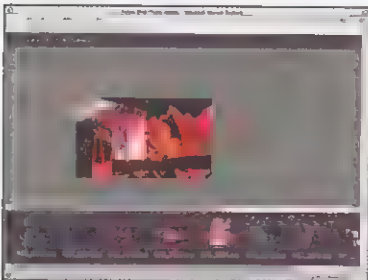
Page 22 Get to grips with the Slice tool and how it can speed up page cropping



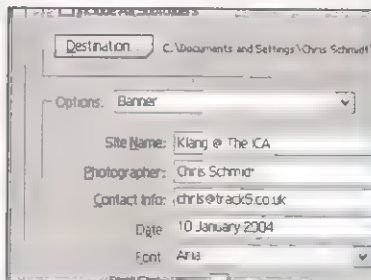
Page 23 Creating slices is one thing, but you'll need to be able to modify them too



Page 25 For a better understanding of the Slice tool, we'll slice up a layout



Page 26 Discover Photoshop's tools for creating a quick web photo gallery



Page 27 Create your own gallery without knowing anything about HTML



Page 28 Display your images at high resolution online with ZoomView

Integrating animation and mapping tools directly into Photoshop may have lead to confusion for print designers and photographers who have no need for such features. So, Adobe made the decision to group such specific tools together in the associated ImageReady program, providing web designers with their own dedicated environment to complement that of Photoshop.

ImageReady, steady, go!

We'll be looking increasingly toward ImageReady throughout this book, but before we run ahead of ourselves let's return to Photoshop itself and take a look at what's available within

the main application. The new tool that we mentioned provides slice options for dissecting our artwork, while some of the other features include more automated processes such as the Web Photo Gallery and ViewPoint ZoomView options, which we'll examine later.

The other key addition to Photoshop which has proved itself a valuable feature to more than just web designers is the Save for Web option. This is such a feature-rich tool that we'll be looking at it in more detail throughout Chapter 3, but first let's take a look at what tools and features Photoshop provides in its main interface.

Cutting it with the Slice tool

Over the years the Slice tool has remained a mystery to many, but not for long...

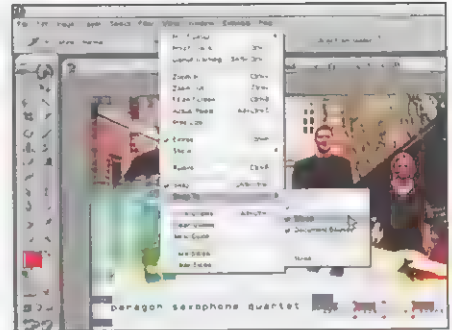


Foreground or background?

Just as the Slice tool will break up your image, so too will it help with more complex design layouts as you determine which elements of a page should become background or foreground elements. You may want to embed an image into the background of the holding table so you can layer HTML text on top, for example.

Uploading and embedding large images into a web page is never a good idea. Large images will have larger file sizes that take longer to download; and if your web audience is kept waiting too long for your content, then they may be tempted to hit the Back button and try another site.

If your image files look bulky, think about chopping your layout into smaller parts that will download individually – this is where the Slice tool comes into effect. Making use of the tool will divide your page into



Creating slices is as easy as using the Crop tool. Keeping the View > Snap option ticked will keep the boundaries your slices create to a minimum

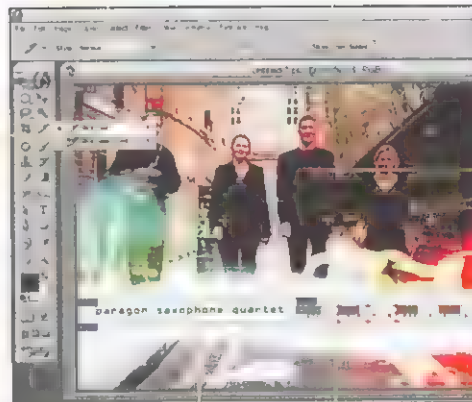
manageable chunks and ensure that your layout fits together perfectly when uploaded as a web page.

RECOGNISING THE SLICE OPTIONS

The options bar for the regular Slice tool contains some basic tools, including the ability to constrain the tool dimensions to fixed or relative sizes.

The Slice tools are grouped together next to the related Crop tool from the main Photoshop toolbar. Defining slices is like creating multiple crop regions.

The title graphic here, for example, would be better suited as a .GIF, while the photographic imagery would work best as a JPG.



If you create a page layout by using regular Photoshop guides, you then have the handy one-click option to create slices from these original guides.

Slices can reduce the download speeds of your images, as well as determine different compression methods for the individual graphics the slices define.

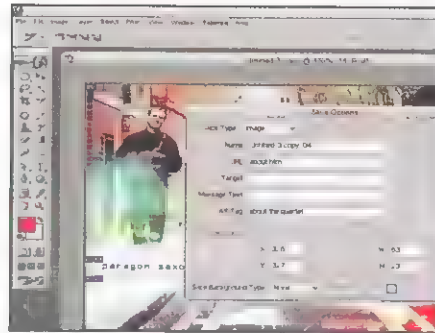
When slices are created you'll be able to differentiate between the different regions within the layout, as each will be clearly visible.

The Slice Select tool

Grouped with the regular Slice tool is the Slice Select tool for modifying existing slices...

Once you've defined your slice regions you'll probably need to give them a few tweaks, which is where the Slice Select tool comes into play. Using this tool enables you to click on a slice to select it, then make adjustments to the anchor points that appear around it.

This way you can rearrange the sizing and dimensions to fine-tune your layout before exporting the final settings as a complete web page. If you've ever used the regular Crop tool you will feel quite at home with Slice Select. The main



Accessing the options for each slice gives you the chance to add and edit attributes such as the URL details if the image is to become a link

options for this tool are located in its Options bar and some of the trickiest are outlined below.



Lateral thinking

If you're attempting to resize a slice that edges onto another, you'll find those boundaries will also be moved. However, on some occasions you may find it impossible to resize a slice without making adjustments to those surrounding the slice in question.

SLICE SELECT OPTIONS

CLICKING THE Slice Options button opens a dialogue box that allows you to configure the slice type and any attributes you wish to associate, such as the web address for any links and alternative text.

CONVERTING AN automatically generated slice to a user slice prevents it from being changed when you reorganise your slice structure. This option is only available with auto slices, which can be determined by their greyed out appearance.

IF YOU NEED consistent results when slicing large images you may opt to use the Divide Slice feature, which enables you to determine the number of slices and their dimensions for horizontal or vertical slicing.

CHOOSING TO 'Hide Auto Slices' enables you to concentrate on more important aspects of your page layout. When hidden the option button toggles over to become a 'Show Auto Slices' function instead.



Accessing options

Modifying a slice's options is a common task you'll come to perform – as well as accessing them through the Slice Options button within the Options bar you can also bring these up using the more convenient method of double-clicking directly on the relevant slice.

Slice types

Understanding the variations in slice types will help you create more useful end results...



No image text formatting

If you define a slice as the 'No Image' type you can still embed HTML text into the cell. Enter the appropriate copy into the field that becomes available in the Slice Options dialogue. Raw HTML entered into this field will be recognised and give you a headstart when further modifying the exported page.

When you use the Slice tool you'll notice that any selections you make automatically affect the surrounding area. This is because your slices need to be recreated within an HTML table, which is built around a basic grid.

Regions that you specifically define are made available as User Slices, while those created to accommodate your defined regions become Auto Slices. The difference between the two being that only User Slices can be selected and modified using the Slice Select tool,

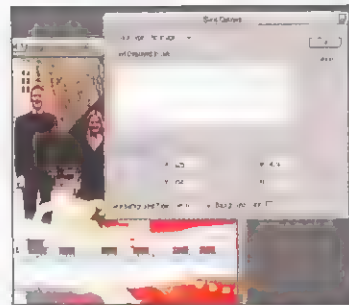
while Auto Slices will simply adapt to any changes you decide to make.

The logic behind this is to protect your original slices from being inadvertently modified, and although this may cause initial confusion you'll soon come to appreciate the principle. In fact, the method allows you to create much more efficient graphic components from your layouts with minimal effort, as you can simply drag selections over the key regions of your image and leave Photoshop to figure out the best HTML layout for the table to adopt.

SLICE AND BACKGROUND TYPES

Reduce file size by controlling your page's background content

Once you've created your slices you can access the Slice Options to determine the Slice Type and Background Type. The Slice Type options allow you to choose whether or not the slice content will be graphical, while the Background Type lets you decide on a background colour to be used for any transparent areas of a graphic slice, or to determine the HTML colour code needed to fill the background of a 'No Image' cell. Setting a slice type to 'No Image' is a great way to reduce the file size if you have large areas of flat colour. Using this method bypasses the creation of a graphic and associates regular HTML attributes to the cell.



Defining a cell as a 'No Image' slice type allows us to determine the HTML background colour of that cell

Using the Slice tools

Get to know the Slice tools by putting theory into practice. It's nothing to get cut up about...

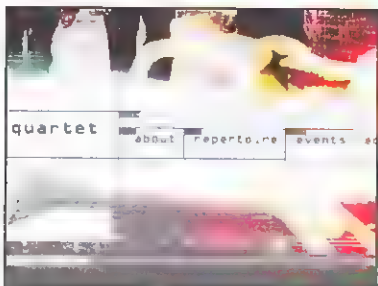


Open the **paragon.psd** file from the CD and make sure you can see the existing layout via the **View > Show > Guides** submenu. Making sure also that the **View > Extras** option is checked, as this will give you a starting point from which to create your slices. Use the regular **Slice** tool to create a selection around the name of the quartet; the rest of the layout inherits auto slices to match your selection.

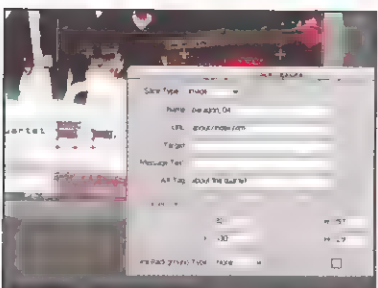


paragon.psd

Copy the **paragon.psd** file from the CD for a basic flattened page layout, complete with initial guides that we can use to explore the way the **Slice** tools work.



Next, create slices around each of the navigation items by using the existing guides as a basis for your selections. Keeping the slices close to the actual text will help make the relevant link graphic more apparent when it's used as an actual page, so leave the space above each navigation element clear to leave a longer auto slice between the main image and the actual navigation buttons.

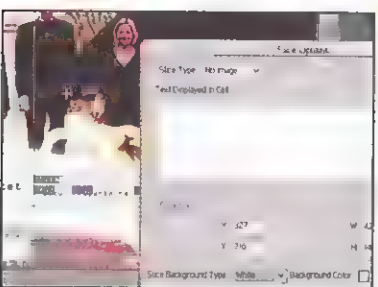


Once you've completed slicing each navigation item the basic structure is complete. The latter regions will contain links to other pages within our site, and we should determine locations for these links before exporting the page. Choose the **Slice Select** tool and double-click the **About** slice. In the dialogue you can now enter the link details and repeat for the remaining navigation slices.



Snap-tastic

Keep the **View > Snap** and the **View > Snap to > Guides** options checked and you'll find the creation of your slices becomes a much easier task, as new slices automatically join onto those surrounding them.



The empty slice above the navigation need not be converted to a graphic – doing so would only slow down the page's delivery. Instead we'll define a background colour. Use the **Slice Select** tool again to double-click on the region. In the **Slice Options** dialogue choosing 'No Image' from the initial **Slice Type** list, then **White** from the **Slice Background Type** drop-down.

Automated Web Photo Gallery

If you want to get your snaps online, but don't know much about web design, try this...

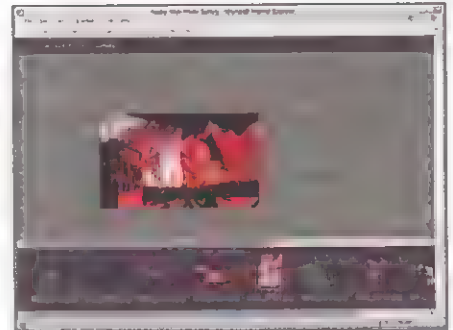


The next step

Once you've created your Web Photo Gallery you could just upload the resulting files to your web server, although Photoshop does provide fields for you to enter specific information about each of the images for a more personalised result.

Although it won't be used too often by professional web designers the File > Automate submenu contains a neat little addition. The Web Photo Gallery option may be of interest to anyone wanting to display their work online.

All that's required to create an entire gallery site is to launch the tool and configure the dialogue settings to automatically create the HTML necessary. The tool also converts the contained images into thumbnail and full-size variations that can be uploaded to your webspace.



The final results aren't going to win too many design awards, but for ease of use the method could save some time for personal projects

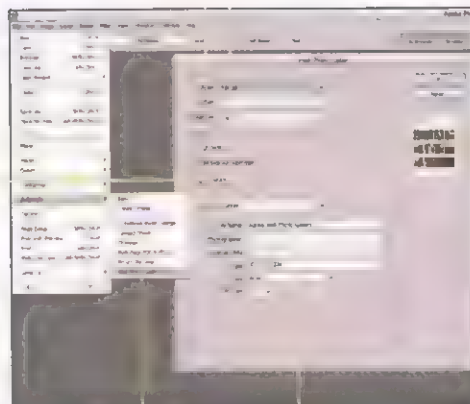
All you need is a folder full of original images, and Photoshop will create your gallery for you!

THE WEB PHOTO GALLERY INTERFACE

The tool's dialogue screen is headed by several initial options. These enable you to choose the style of your generated gallery, enter your contact details and choose a preferred file extension.

Choosing a destination folder will define where the converted HTML and image files that your new gallery relies on will be saved.

The Web Photo Gallery feature is tucked away under the File > Automate list. This list also contains a number of other related features that may be of interest.



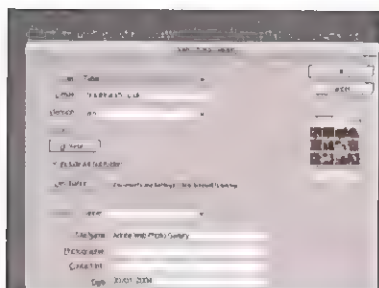
The Folders area allows you to determine which folder on your computer will be converted and contained in your generated gallery.

Choosing one of the different styles available from the initial Site category will prompt a small preview of the overall look and feel of the style selected.

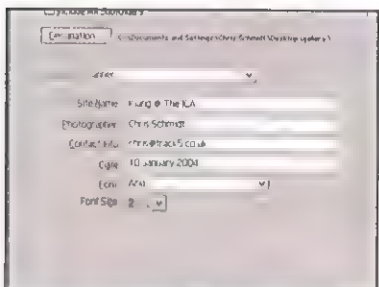
The options at the foot of the interface allow you to further configure individual aspects of your generated site, with options adapting to your initial choice.

Create your own gallery

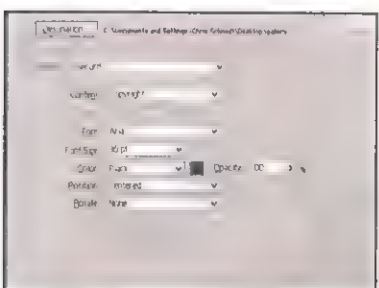
With a little configuration you can create your own gallery, then upload it to your web space



Click on **File > Automate > Web Photo Gallery** and you'll see the options for your new gallery. Run through the **Styles** to see a preview of the designs available and choose one before entering your email details and choosing your preferred web extension. Use the **Browse** and **Destination** buttons to choose locations for your original images and to specify where your gallery will be saved.



From within the **Options** area of the dialogue box you can now choose the individual components that define your final gallery. By default, the **Banner** is selected, which acts as the header to your gallery pages. Making any changes to the available options here will be reflected in the final exported web pages.



You'll then need to choose the other categories available through the drop-down list at the head of the **Options** area of the dialogue screen to further configure your gallery. Include the dimensions of both the thumbnail and full size images, any custom colours you want to apply to the HTML and whether to add any security content such as a copyright statement.



Once you've finished entering the required information and configured your gallery, you can hit the **OK** button and leave Photoshop to build your site for you. If your source folder has a large number of images you may choose to put the kettle on at this point, but by the time you get back you'll find your gallery is waiting to be uploaded to your web server.



Before you start...

To create your own Web Photo Gallery you'll need a folder of images that you intend to include. This is the only preparation you'll need to make, other than maybe creating a new empty folder into which your generated files should be saved.



File info

The caption, title, copyright and credits information that appear represent whatever information has been stored in the **File Info** dialogue box. So if there's no information here, you won't have any in your gallery either.

ViewPoint ZoomView

With the help of a plug-in you can offer high-quality imagery without copyright worries...



ZoomView gallery

Appreciating the potential behind the ZoomView feature is best experienced for yourself. Take a look at the ZoomView gallery to see a collection of images that have been processed and judge for yourself.

www.viewpoint.com/zoomview/gallery.html

As we mentioned earlier, copyright is a sensitive issue for many digital artists. But without offering your work online you're missing out on a huge audience. Another downside of using the web to distribute your work is the kind of dimensions and resolution available, which can further detract from the more subtle detail of your work should you reduce your images to fit the more common browser sizes.

One way around both copyright and sizing issues is to make use of the little-known ViewPoint

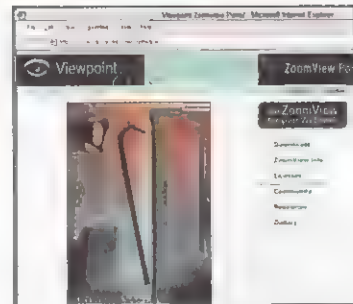
ZoomView feature, which you'll find tucked away under the File > Export options. You can use this feature to convert an image into ZoomView format. With images saved in this format, the viewer can zoom into the image to see things at full detail, without the copyright owner worrying about their work being used without permission.

The downside to the method is that your website visitors also need the plug-in, but it's still worth considering for photographers wanting to showcase their work.

BROADCAST LICENSE

You need to get hold of a license to use the software

The ZoomView method is provided by a third party, so you'll need to obtain a license before you can make any ZoomView files available online. The good news is that you are eligible for a free license if you are providing your work for non-commercial purposes. There are also exceptions for commercial websites, which means you too may be eligible for a free license if you are using the feature for promoting services or to allow your clients access to images for the purposes of reviewing proofs and portfolios. If in doubt, check the ViewPoint website by clicking on the Get License button available within the ZoomView dialogue screen.

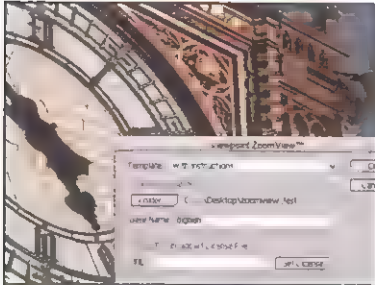


Use the free plug-in to view ZoomView content from the ViewPoint website and view existing galleries

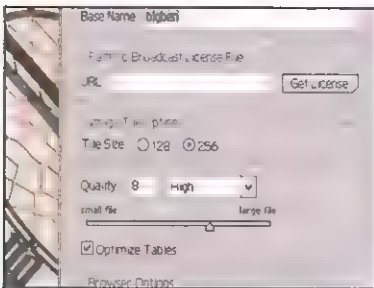
www.viewpoint.com/zoomview

Exporting images to ZoomView

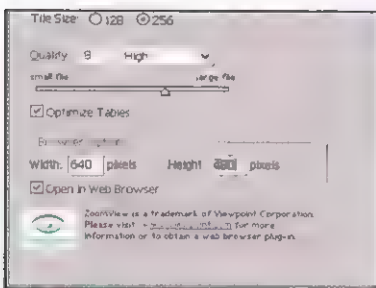
Converting images to the ZoomView format involves just a few tweaks to the settings...



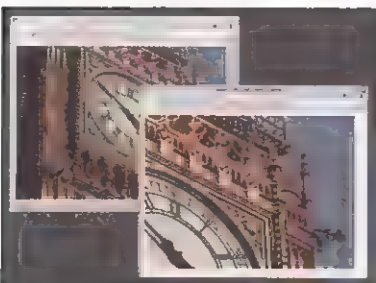
Open the **bigben.jpg** file in Photoshop and head to **File > Export > ZoomView** to access the dialogue settings to configure the image. The first choice to make is which template to use, before you determine the output location for the generated files. The Base Name option can be left as it is, because this determines a common name for the various files that will be created.



Unless you've already acquired a license you can ignore the following field and experiment with various image tile options. ZoomView technology uses image tiling to load only part of a high resolution image that the viewer has requested – as our image is quite large, a setting of 256 will generate better final results. Set the Quality slider to high and check the Optimize Tables option.



Our original image's dimensions are 1280x960 pixels, but we've decided to display the original image at half the size. Enter 640 pixels for the width and 480 for the height. Check the 'Open in Web Browser' option and hit the OK button for Photoshop and ZoomView to create the necessary files and present the results in your web browser.



If you have the ZoomView plug-in installed, you'll now have your original image visible at the reduced size by default. Clicking on the image will automatically zoom into that particular area and sharpen the image, so the original full size image is available. You can move around the image by clicking and dragging or zoom back to the full view with a single right mouse click.



BigBen.jpg

Use the file **bigben.jpg** from the CD to discover how to use the ZoomView feature. The image contains plenty of detail of the famous clock face taken with a Minolta A1 camera, which we can appreciate online using the ZoomView plug-in.



Editing ZoomView HTML files

If you transfer your converted ZoomView images to another page you'll need to be sure to copy over all the necessary code to include the containing table, meta information and JavaScript, on which the feature relies. You'll also need to keep the file structure relative of the native .MZV source files.

THE SAVE FOR WEB FEATURE EXPLAINED

Another addition that has become an essential part of Photoshop since version 5.5 is the Save for Web feature, which gives you full control over the optimisation of your online images

Throughout the previous chapter we looked at Photoshop's tools and automated features for working with content destined for use online. But another crucial feature that was introduced in the pivotal 5.5 release is 'Save for Web'. This unassuming feature is accessed when exporting your completed images and offers powerful image optimisation tools, enabling you to reduce the file size of your images for the most efficient online delivery possible.

In the days before Save For Web, optimising image files relied on trial and error. This might have involved reducing the colour palette and indexing .GIF files for example,

or determining the best compression settings for .JPG files.

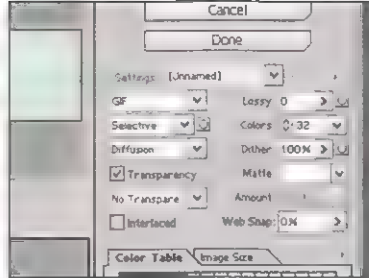
A new method

Save for Web removes much of the guesswork from the conversion and optimisation process, as the tool presents the user with multiple views of the same image, each of which has its own settings applied. Using this method it's now possible to see how applying certain levels of compression will affect an image in real-time, as well as providing information on the image's final file size and download times.

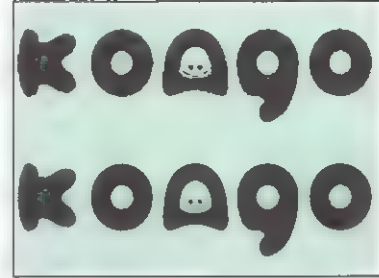
The tool also contains numerous basic tools for further modifying



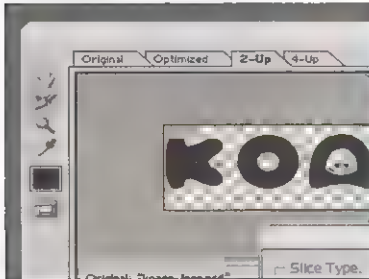
Page 32 Understanding how the tool works will streamline your conversions



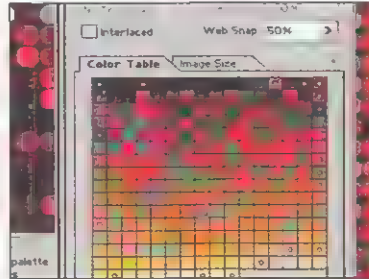
Page 33 Be aware of the different settings for various file formats



Page 35 Anti-aliasing and matting dictate the smoothness of your graphics



Page 36 Get familiar with Save For Web tools; save time and improve workflow



Page 37 Fine-tune your image's colour table to reduce the size of your images



Page 39 Create a functional web page with no knowledge of HTML necessary

your work without returning to the main Photoshop interface. Many of these may already be familiar to you by now, but we'll be looking at these in more detail over the coming pages, along with methods of further modifying your exported images to best suit their final destination.

Preparing your images

Before you access the Save for Web tool you'll need to make that sure your images are just the way you want them. If you're making individual graphics, for instance, you'll need to be aware of the dimensions that your canvas requires and crop right into the image as

closely as possible. This is to get rid of any excess data that the image may contain, as well as ensuring that you can position the new element within your web page without any unnecessary padding influencing its position.

For larger sliced designs this may not be quite as important, as the entire canvas is eventually divided into individual graphics. All the same, you'll still need to know how to configure your slices then export the final layout into individual graphics and the necessary HTML to put them back together through the browser. We'll let you know the best way to achieve this.

The Save for Web interface

Understand the Save for Web feature by looking at its most important options

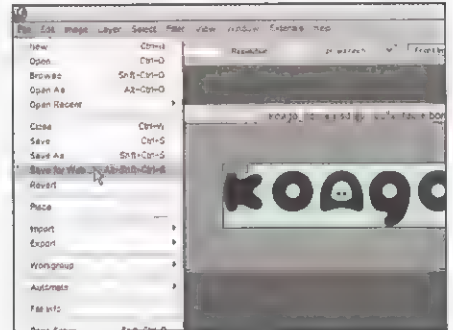


Keyboard shortcut

As any pro web designer will be able to tell you, the Save for Web feature can be quickly accessed using [Alt]+[Shift]+[Control]+[S] (for PC users) or [Shift]+[Option]+[Command] (for Macs) keyboard shortcut. They may seem long-winded but it's well worth drilling these into your consciousness if you use the feature regularly.

Once you've finished working on an image or layout and want to optimise it for use online, you'll need to access the Save for Web feature via File > Save for Web. This will transfer your image into the tool's interface, from where you can make refinements to the compression methods that will be used to strike the ideal balance between file size and image quality.

Naturally some concessions may need to be made, but with a little understanding of how the tool and its various options work, you'll soon



Once your image is prepared, head over to the Save for Web feature via the File menu. Here you can give the file one last almighty squash

be designing graphics can be easily optimised without an excessive loss in image quality.

THE SAVE FOR WEB INTERFACE EXPLAINED

The tabs at the head of the interface provide access to the different views available. These include the original or optimised image, along with 2- or 4-image views for comparing results.

A selection of basic tools are available for further manipulating the artwork from within the Save for Web feature's dialogue box.

The converted image is previewed alongside the original in 2-Up view, complete with a handy summary of any settings applied underneath.



With the 2-Up tab selected we have access to the original image in its own window, so we can compare our conversion with the uncompressed image quality.

The actual settings are configured through the controls available to the right of the interface, and will change depending on your chosen format.

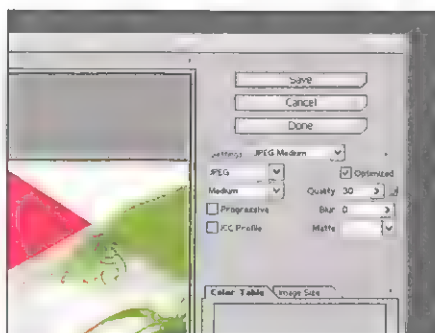
A colour table and image size information is available toward the bottom-right of the window, which offer specific control over these aspects of the conversion.

Compressing .JPG images

Only by recognising the various controls at our disposal can we optimise a .JPG efficiently

When entering the Save for Web tool, the first choice you'll need to make is the actual format for your converted graphic. Once this has been selected from the drop-down menu you'll notice the remaining options adapt accordingly.

With the .JPG format there are relatively few options, with the Quality the most important. With a setting of 30 (or medium) you'll find a decent balance between quality and file size. You may opt to raise this for more detailed images, but keep a close eye on the anticipated file size



With the .JPG format chosen as the preferred export format, the options adapt to make relevant settings available

— especially with images of larger dimensions, which can soon increase dramatically if you're not careful.



Quick conversions

At the head of the Settings area of the Save for Web dialogue box is a drop-down list that contains common settings across the various web graphic formats.

Choosing from these options will often provide more-than-adequate results without any manual configuration necessary.

JPG SETTINGS

THE QUALITY option determines the amount of compression applied – a high setting means better quality images at the expense of file size. The circle icon to the right allows you to apply selective compression.

THE OPTIMIZED option should be checked for maximum compression.

THE PROGRESSIVE option, when checked, will display your images as they load, making it look like your images are coming into focus.

APPLYING BLUR to images can reduce the file size further, but don't use this over more detailed images for risk of losing quality.

THE ICC profile should be checked to preserve this aspect of the file's information for the purposes of colour correction.

THE MATTE option specifies a fill colour for areas of your image that may originally be transparent.



Download times

Keep an eye on the summary information at the foot of the preview to get some idea of the anticipated file size and download time that your optimised image will require. You can change the default modem speed via the menu button that appears at the top-right corner of the preview pane.

Understanding .GIF settings

Optimising .GIFs is slightly more complex – we'll tackle the most important settings



Number of colours

Just because your image only contains a single background and foreground hue, don't assume you can drop your colours right down to two colours. If you do this, your image will look pixelated as you'll be stripping the interim colours required to produce anti-aliasing. A colour table of four or eight colours will make a negligible increase to file size, but a dramatic improvement in quality.



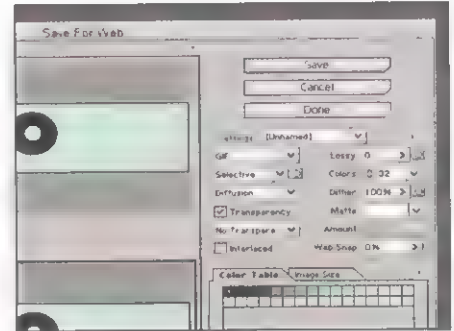
Dither

'Dithering' refers to the process whereby colours not directly supported by the colour table are recreated. This is done by alternating pixels of the nearest colour on either side of that required in an attempt to trick the eye.

Select the .GIF format and the Save For Web feature presents you with a wide range of options, although you'll only need to know a few to begin with. Reducing the amount of colours is a good starting point, as the fewer colours indexed, the smaller your file size.

If your .GIF contains transparent areas you'll also need to check the Transparency option for this to be included, as well as determining any Matting or 'anti-aliasing'.

Checking the Interlaced option will display the image as it loads,



.GIFs provide a wider range of options when compared with JPGs, but you may find that only a few options are regularly used

while the Web Snap option will shift your image's colours to the more web-friendly palette.

GENERATING A COLOR TABLE

THE PERCEPTUAL setting creates a custom colour table that gives priority to colours that are friendly to the human eye.

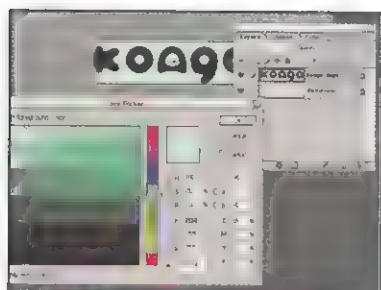
THE SELECTIVE setting is the default and provides similar results to Perceptual, but will favour broad areas of colour, while preserving web colours to produce images generally more consistent with the original.

THE ADAPTIVE setting creates a table by sampling colours from the spectrum that are used most frequently within the image. So an image containing only green and blue produces a colour table made primarily of these colours.

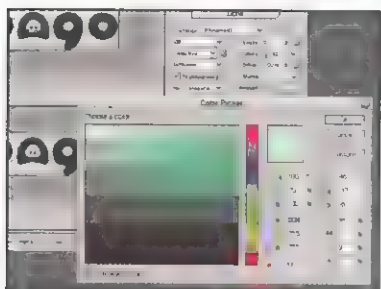
THE WEB option will adapt existing colours to match those contained within the standard 216-colour range of web-safe colours. This ensures your colours are reproduced accurately in web browsers, but can create large file sizes and change colours significantly compared to the original.

Transparency and matting

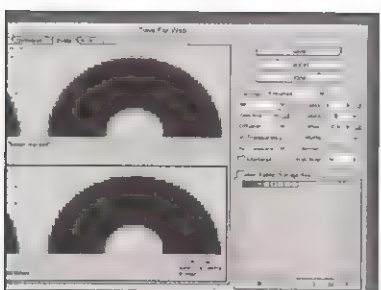
Use matting to create smooth transitions between a graphic and its background



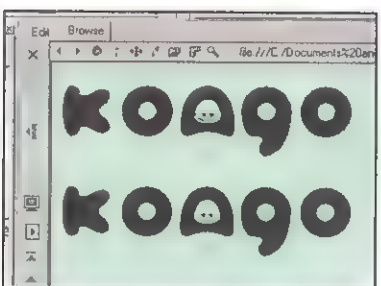
1 Open `koago_logo.psd` from your CD – this is ideal for conversion into a .GIF. With the Eyedropper tool take a sample of the background colour, then click on the new foreground colour in the main toolbar to open the Color Picker. Tick the Only Web Colors box, then make a note of the hexadecimal code for the colour (#CCFFFF) before hiding the background layer (click the layer's 'eye' icon in the Layer palette) and accessing Save for Web.



2 Select the .GIF format and make sure the Transparency option is checked to retain your see-through areas. Ignoring the other settings for the time being, turn toward the Matte option and choose the Other option to invoke the Color Picker. Enter the colour details of the original background (#CCFFFF) and click OK to apply the fringing to the foreground logo.



3 If you now zoom into the image (using the magnifier, top-left of the window) and examine the edges of the logo you'll see how the matting creates a coloured edge, improving the blend between the logo and its anticipated background. If you continue to reduce the colours down to 8 the file size of the logo is dramatically reduced. Hit the Save button to export your work.



4 We can now take the image and embed it into a web page. You'll notice how smooth the edges appear when compared to the same image without matting applied. The top version is without the anti-aliased edging, while that on the bottom contains the same image we've just converted – both set against a flat HTML colour background.



koago_logo.psd
Use the `koago_logo.psd` file to complete the following steps. The file contains a logo set against a colour background, but to include transparency we'll need to anti-alias the edges to keep things nice and smooth.



Hex codes
Although you may be more used to working with RGB or CMYK values when specifying colours it's worth getting into the habit of using the hexadecimal code, which is used to determine colour within HTML.

Editing images in Save for Web

Thanks to a limited tool set it's possible to make basic edits from inside Save for Web



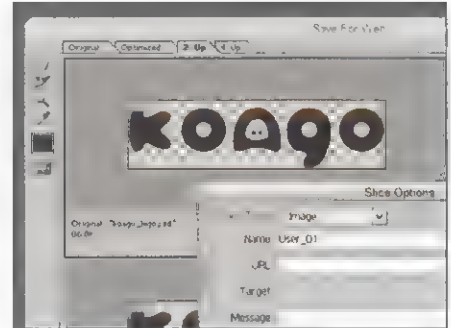
Keyboard shortcuts

Just as many of the tools available in Save for Web bear a close relationship with their counterparts within the main interface, so too do the keyboard shortcuts. Holding down the [Control]+[+] or [-] will zoom in and out of your image, for example. If you're using a Mac, replace [Control] with [Command].

The Save for Web feature is primarily intended for optimising your completed work prior to exporting. However, on occasions you may find you need to carry out basic amendments to your image, or simply to navigate around a large image for a better look.

Rather than cancel the action and return to Photoshop there's a basic selection of tools along the left-hand side of the Save to Web dialogue box, which are ideal for basic tasks.

The descriptions below should give you some understanding of



One way to modify your work from within Save for Web is by double-clicking on a segment with the Slice Select tool. This opens the slice options

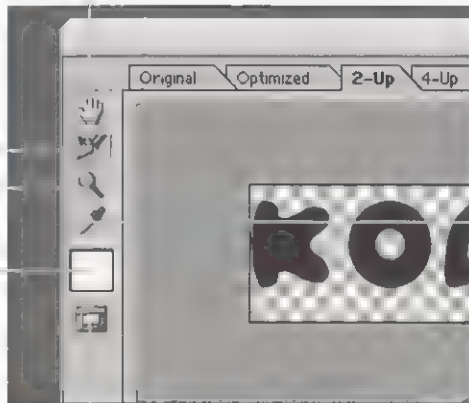
what these tools can achieve, which will save you time and make your workflow more efficient.

THE SAVE FOR WEB MINI-TOOLBAR IN DETAIL

The Slice Select tool is available for modifying any sliced components of your layout. Double-click on a slice to access its options.

The Zoom tool also works in the same way as the main Photoshop counterpart, enabling you to increase or reduce the magnification of your image.

Any colours selected using the Eyedropper tool become available here. Clicking directly on this palette opens up the Color Picker for further options.



The Hand tool works as you might expect, by enabling you to move around larger images. Holding the space bar while clicking and dragging has the same effect.

The Eyedropper tool will allow you to sample colours directly within the Save for Web interface, making it easy to gauge colours for matting, for example.

If your layout makes use of slices you can toggle their visibility on and off using this final tool, giving you a better view of your work.

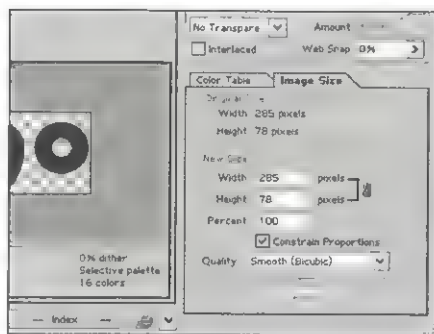
Additional options

Save for Web also gives you options for controlling the Color Table and image size

Nestling in the bottom-right corner of the Save for Web window are tabbed options for tweaking an image's Color Table (only available for .GIF and .PNG formats), as well as changing the exported image size.

The latter option is simple, giving you the chance to edit your image dimensions – by pixel dimensions or by a relative value – without returning to the main interface.

Choosing the Jagged (Nearest Neighbour) interpolation method creates a faster, but less precise,



Choosing the Image Size tab provides options for resizing your image directly from within the Save for Web dialogue interface

conversion, while the Smooth (Bicubic) option is more precise and results in smoother tonal graduations.



Interpolation

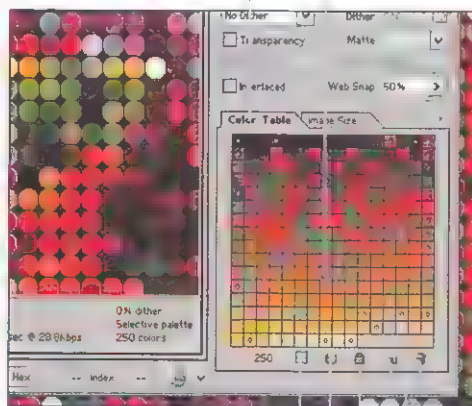
When an image is resampled, an 'interpolation method' is used to assign colour values to any new pixels it creates, based on the colour values of existing pixels in the image. The more sophisticated the method, the more quality and detail from the original image are preserved.

TWEAKING THE COLOR TABLE

The Color Table is accessed via the named tab toward the bottom-right of the Save for Web interface. A related menu is available by clicking on the arrowhead towards the right-hand side.

With an individual colour selected you can map the selected colour to transparency using the first shortcut icon in this set.

The next icon enables you to shift colour to or away from the web-safe spectrum. This is useful if too dramatic a colour shift has occurred.



Colours contained within the current table are visible in the main area, with colours that correspond to those within the web-safe range being identified by a dot.

The final icons should be familiar as generic symbols that Photoshop uses for creating and deleting items – in this case they add or remove colours.

If a specific colour is essential to the content you can choose to lock individual colours using the padlock icon, so as not to remove them when reducing your colours.

Contextual menus

For ultimate control over your exported image settings, don't forget the contextual menus



Download speeds

There's no denying that broadband connectivity is on the rise but you cannot take it for granted that everyone who accesses your site will have such a luxury. Setting your download preview time to the 56k modem and designing for this audience will provide a more realistic average of your files' download times.

Another feature that's common to many of Photoshop's tools, palettes and features is the contextual menu. These menus present additional options specific to each tool tool, which can be accessed via the small arrowhead icons contained within circles.

The Save for Web interface houses no less than three of these menus – the first is accessed at the top of the preview panes and to the right of the view tabs. From here you can specify colour compensation, as well as preview anticipated download times

for your converted image, based on different internet connection speeds.

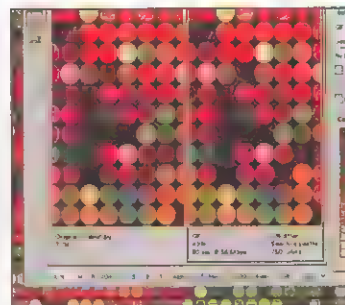
The second is located at the top-right corner of the Settings area and enables you to save combinations of settings, gain greater control over slices and access the all-important HTML output settings – we'll take a closer look at these in chapter 9.

The final menu is only available with the Color Table tab active and offers greater control over general colour options, such as converting all your non-web safe colours to the safe palette.

KNOW YOUR COLOURS

Keep an eye on your hues in an instant

The final component of the Save for Web interface for us to consider is the information bar along the bottom. Two of the options here enable us to magnify the view and to preview our exported file in a web browser. However, the feature that you'll find most useful is the colour information pane, which gives details about the area currently below your cursor. This information is presented as an RGB value, as well as the equivalent HTML 'hex' code. This gives you a quick indication as to whether your image's revised Color Table will result in accurately represented colours, or whether your exported file will create obvious colour shifts once it's put online.



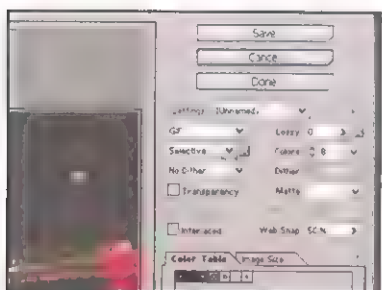
The colour information at the foot of the interface indicates the values beneath the current cursor position

Saving an optimised page

The Save for Web tool makes optimising and saving a working web page much simpler



1 Open the `paragon_sliced.psd` image from your CD, and make sure you can see the created slices via **View > Show > Slices**. Access **Save for Web** via the **File** menu and select the **2-Up** tab to compare your conversion with the original. Use the **Optimized** option if your screen size can't handle both views. Use the **Slice Select** tool, hold down **[Shift]** and select the main photographic content.



2 Configure these slices to be converted into the **JPG** format with a medium compression setting. Then, select the remaining slices that constitute the central text and navigation elements set against white by clicking and dragging over the region with the slice select tool. Configure these using the **.GIF** format and reduce the number of colours used to **8** to take into account the text anti-aliasing.



3 With the basic configuration complete, hit **Save** to prompt the 'Save Optimized As' window and choose a location where your converted files will be saved – place them within an empty directory to make it easier to access your assets. Change the file name if necessary and choose the 'HTML and Images' option from the 'Save As Type' field. Make sure **All Slices** is selected and hit **Save** again.



4 Photoshop will now begin slicing and optimising the image to match your settings. Once complete you'll be able to access the folder to discover the **.HTML** file, along with a sub-directory containing the individual images. Double-click the **.HTML** file to preview the optimised page in your browser. If you like you can now open the page within your web building software to make any further changes.



paragon_sliced.psd

Use the above file to continue with this walkthrough. It's the same image that we used earlier, but we've put the slices in place for you already.



Saving individual images

We've demonstrated this method using a sliced page design, but you can use exactly the same process for optimising individual graphics. Obviously you won't need to access individual slices, but the image optimisation and saving process is the same. However, you'll only need to export the graphic without the **HTML** option.

Chapter 4

GETTING STARTED WITH IMAGEREADY

Creating web content with Photoshop alone is possible, but the program also comes with an integrated tool that's dedicated to the job. In this chapter we'll introduce ImageReady...

As we've already discovered, Photoshop contains a number of essential features for creating online content, but if we were to rely on these features we'd soon find its limitations – after all, the program was never really intended for the task. Fortunately, another major inclusion that Photoshop has acquired since the 5.5 web upgrade is the integration of the dedicated ImageReady program.

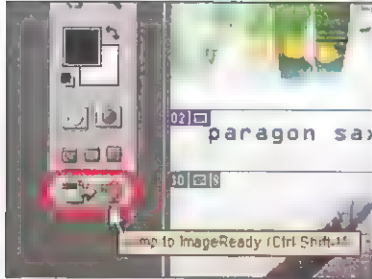
Previously, ImageReady had only been available as a stand-alone application, although it owed many of its principals to Adobe's flagship software in terms of interface and functionality. So when the 5.5

upgrade came around it seemed only natural that ImageReady should be combined with Photoshop to create a powerful combination of tools for the web designer.

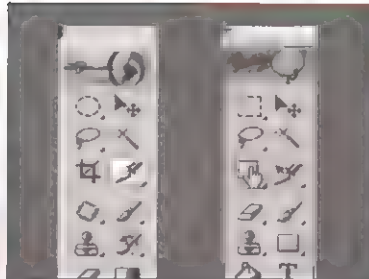
Two into one

Even though ImageReady has been included as part of the Photoshop package since 1999, it's essentially still a separate application, which many Photoshop users don't have any reason to explore.

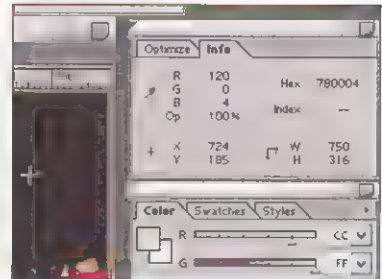
But as we'll show you over the following chapters, the software provides a range of dedicated tools that online designers really cannot afford to ignore. If you are



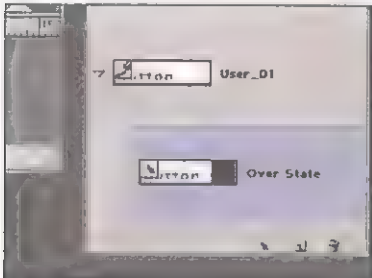
Page 42 Find out what ImageReady can do and how it complements Photoshop



Page 43 ImageReady looks familiar, but dig deeper and you'll see the differences



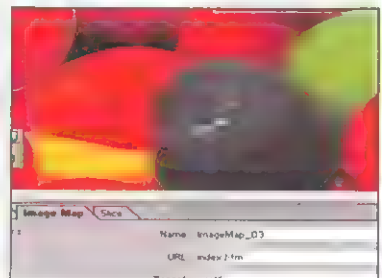
Page 45 The palettes look familiar, but the new features need some introduction



Page 47 Create interactive images using the humble rollover effect



Page 48 ImageReady's animation tools bring a new dimension to your content



Page 49 Find out about HTML image mapping and create links in any shape

reasonably familiar with Photoshop you should be able to make the step over to ImageReady without any problems, because both titles share a similar interface and approach to digital imaging editing.

Of course, there are important differences between the two titles, but with the programs intelligently recognising each other, it becomes easy to take advantage of both feature sets as you bounce your work seamlessly between applications.

Moving on...

It's no surprise then, that ImageReady is the preferred method of creating web content for most Photoshop

users, with more advanced support for web-specific features such as rollovers, animation and the creation of image maps.

Now we've got to grips with Photoshop's basic concepts, the majority of the rest of this Guide will tend to focus on using ImageReady. However, we'll still be making reference back to Photoshop for common features, which we'll start to explore over the next chapter.

Once you understand the strengths that each application brings to the creation of content for the web, you'll soon realise just how powerful the combination of these two great titles can be.

Accessing ImageReady

Photoshop's shortcut to ImageReady will preserve your edits as you switch programs



Keyboard shortcut

The keyboard combination of [Control]+[Shift]+[M] (using Windows) or [Command]+[Shift]+[M] (on a Mac) is well worth becoming familiar with if you anticipate working between Photoshop and ImageReady. This shortcut will toggle between the two applications, taking any current changes that you've made with you.

Despite ImageReady being bundled with Photoshop, many users prefer to use the main program to develop designs. These are then exported to ImageReady to create web-specific content.

When it's time to export your work you can opt to launch ImageReady by traditional methods (via the Windows Start menu or from your Apple Mac Applications folder), but there is a more efficient way. If you've worked on a design in Photoshop simply hit the 'Jump to ImageReady' button in the toolbar,



Transferring work to and from ImageReady is made possible using the Jump To ImageReady button found at the foot of the toolbar

which launches the program, and also transfers any changes that you've applied to your active image.



Up to date

When you're working with an image in both Photoshop and ImageReady you'll find the file temporarily unavailable when you move from one application to another. Don't worry – any changes are quickly transferred so you can take advantage of both tools without you needing to save your work.

WHY USE IMAGEREADY OVER PHOTOSHOP?

- ☐ **IMAGEREADY** is like a more flexible version of Save for Web, but with many of Photoshop's core tools and features also at your disposal.
- ☐ **ANIMATION EFFECTS** are possible within ImageReady for the creation of basic animated content. You can use frames to create animated .GIFs.
- ☐ **IMAGE MAPS** are impossible through Photoshop alone, while ImageReady can recognise, create and configure them without any problems. It will also create the HTML needed to produce the final page.
- ☐ **IMAGEREADY** is much more capable when working with slices or even creating rollover buttons from such elements, which can include multiple state buttons for more advanced results.
- ☐ **DEDICATED PALETTES** are available to ImageReady, which give you access to more web-specific content. This includes optimisation settings for exported work and rollover configuration.

What's the difference?

Look a little closer at ImageReady and you'll see it's not quite the same as Photoshop

On first impressions, ImageReady bears an uncanny resemblance to Photoshop. Indeed, many similarities within the interface, menu items and keyboard shortcuts make the program seem familiar to anyone who has ever used the image editing giant.

But look closer and differences do start to emerge. Many of these may be obvious to seasoned Photoshop users, but an explanation of what they bring to the software will be of benefit to the more casual user. In this chapter we'll look in detail at



The ability to float groups of tools freely is a feature unique to ImageReady, which many would appreciate in Photoshop itself

some of these new features – the diagram below should give you an idea of how the interface is presented.



Generation gap

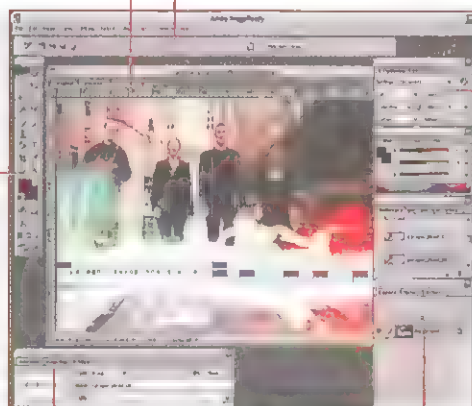
In common with most of the previous Photoshop Focus Guide issues, we're concentrating primarily on the Photoshop and ImageReady 7.0 generation. All the features we mention here can also be found in the updated CS version, along with a number of other upgrades which we'll mention throughout the following chapters.

THE IMAGEREADY INTERFACE

The main canvas bears many similarities to when working in Photoshop's Save for Web mode, most notably with the inclusion of the tabs at the head of the image.

The toolbar remains familiar in concept, although there are a couple of additional features, as well as some missing from its Photoshop equivalent.

A dedicated palette group is available to take care of the various web-related options and features that ImageReady supports.



The Options bar is contained in exactly the same position and offers the same purpose as its Photoshop counterpart.

The standard palettes grace the right-hand side of the interface although some, such as Optimize, are unique to ImageReady.

There are also familiar palettes such as those for Layers and Color options although these too may have some slight variations.

A different toolbox

The main toolbar is the best place to start when working with either program



CS tools

The ImageReady CS toolset has a couple of new additions when compared to the 7.0 generation. Most prominent of these is the inclusion of shapes and button options, which enhance the software's vector capabilities.

Photoshop users will recognise most of the icons used in the ImageReady toolbar. However, if you compare the sets you'll soon notice some key differences that reflect the programs' different roles.

ImageReady boasts a wide range of web-specific functions, such as the collection of Image Map tools that are used to define hotspots within a graphic image, for example.

In addition to this, there are a number of web-specific functions that are located below the foreground and background colour

icons. These give you the option to toggle the visibility of mapped and sliced content, making it possible to lose all your visual guidelines if they become too distracting while you define your layouts.

Moving further down the toolbar, the Preview Document button provides a view of the page that may rely on dynamic content. While the Browser Preview option simply creates a temporary version of your layout using the current settings complete with access to the generated HTML files.

WHAT, NO HEALING BRUSH?

What's missing from ImageReady and why

Some core tools are available to both applications, but because it's so easy to switch between the two, the missing elements from ImageReady's set aren't too badly missed. The most notable omissions are the various adjustment tools such as the Healing Brush and Patch tool, along with those grouped together with the Blur and Dodge options. Due to ImageReady's lack of Shape or Pen tools, vector control is still best performed within Photoshop. However, this is hardly surprising when you consider that ImageReady's primary purpose is for the creation of web content. More complex image editing tasks are best left to Photoshop.



Photoshop's toolbar, compared to the smaller ImageReady bar. Omissions are mostly adjustment-based tools

Same palettes, different features

Many of Photoshop's palettes are also available in ImageReady, but often with a subtle twist

The palettes to the right of the ImageReady interface further illustrate the similarities between the two titles, but closer inspection will highlight a few differences.

The ImageReady Info palette, for example, contains additional data on the opacity of a selected hue as well as its hexadecimal value for HTML coding. The Color palette also offers familiar controls, but again with the ability to enter values through the web-centric hexadecimal method.

The Layers menu is essentially the same in both programs, but the



Hexadecimal info is available in the Info and Color palettes within ImageReady, for a more HTML-friendly approach to colour recognition

ImageReady version also includes a range of Unify options, which we've explained further below.



Understanding 'hex' colours

The hexadecimal method used to determine HTML colour is essentially a variant on RGB, with the six digits being grouped in three pairs of two ranging from 00 to FF. Using the RGB model the colour FF0000 would therefore provide the purest red available to the palette.

UNIFYING LAYERS

- ☐ **THE UNIFY** options found in ImageReady's Layer palette determine how changes made to a layer affect related states, should that layer be included within any rollover or animation sequences.
- ☐ **THE FIRST** Unify Layer Position button should be used to apply changes to a layer's position to all states in a rollover, or frames in an animation.
- ☐ **ACTIVATING THE** Unify Layer Visibility button has a similar range of control although, as the name implies, this is used to control the visibility of the various related states.
- ☐ **THE FINAL** option is known as the Unify Layer Style button, which applies changes you make to a layer's style across all rollover and animation frames.
- ☐ **THE LAYER > MATCH** function should be used to apply layer attributes for an existing state or frame to those which it may be linked.



Arranging palettes

Unlike Photoshop, there is no Palette Well in which to keep your frequently used palettes. You can, however, group your preferred tabs together within a common palette, then close down the least popular options.

Unique ImageReady palettes

Besides the common tools, ImageReady has more than its fair share of unique options



Droplet

A droplet can carry out a series of tedious tasks in one simple click. This comes in handy if you know you need to carry out the same task again and again, such as converting a whole folder full of images to JPGs at 72dpi, for example. You can do this in record time by simply dragging the image files onto the Droplet icon.

There's no mistaking that ImageReady is a powerful program in its own right, and there are plenty of extensive features on offer that require their own palettes for managing content. We've already looked at a few palettes that are similar to the ones you'll find in Photoshop, but now we need to become familiar with a range of unique ImageReady variants.

Unlike Photoshop, ImageReady presents all its available palettes by default, so there's no need to worry about hidden options. We mentioned

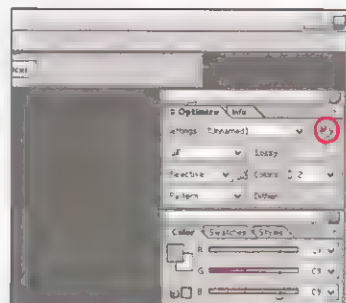
earlier that working in ImageReady can often be compared to an advanced form of working with the Photoshop Save for Web feature.

This becomes quite apparent when you look at the options available to the Optimize palette, which bears many similarities to Save for Web, with options changing depending on the selected file format. Similarly, the Color Table provides a range of features that should be familiar right down to the shortcut icons and contextual menu that we explored back on page 37.

USING DROPLETS

Streamline your workflow by automating common settings

You may be familiar with the concept of Droplets and their close relationship with Actions from within Photoshop itself, so it won't come as too much of a surprise to discover that ImageReady supports the creation of this feature too. The Optimize palette, which you'll use regularly, contains an icon in the top-right corner that allows you to create Droplets at the click of a button, recording your current palette settings. You can then save the Droplet directly to your desktop to automate the process of image format optimisation by simply dragging the files directly onto the droplet and leaving ImageReady to carry out the task.



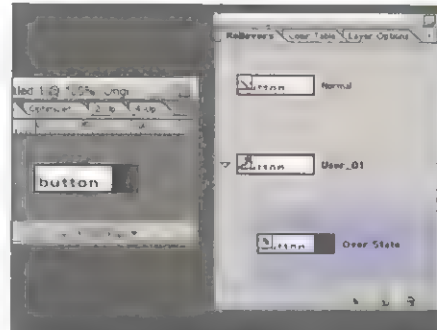
Configure your settings, then create a Droplet with the button in the top-left corner of the Optimization palette

The Rollover palette

Understanding the basics will prevent you getting into a state over your rollovers

Another key ImageReady feature is the Rollover palette, which determines the appearance of your buttons in their various states. Button states are ultimately determined by user interaction, with JavaScript controlling their appearance, depending on the way the mouse cursor is interacting with the button. However, you'll first need to set up your available button states via this new palette.

The shortcut icons at the foot of the palette allow the creation and deletion of individual states or the



The rollover palette displays the various states available to each button. These are defined by the different layer views



States

A 'state' is defined as the status of a button, which is determined by mouse interaction. With no interaction a button is considered to be in 'Normal' state. This changes to the 'Over' state when the mouse passes over the button.

automatic generation of layer-based rollovers. We'll look at the various options in more detail on page 52.

UNDERSTANDING THE ROLLOVER PALETTE

The original image reflects any characteristics dependent on the currently active state, which in this case is for the Over position.

The regular Layers palette comes into play for controlling rollover content – in this case we've decided to display the solid block when the mouse is passed over the anticipated button.

The creation of rollover states can be automated and based around existing layers using the first of the shortcut icons at the foot of the palette.

The individual layers contained within the Rollovers palette determine the different states in which a button can be displayed.

The thumbnail to the 'Over' state displays the solid block. This appears when the mouse cursor passes over the button, while the Normal state displays the regular image.

The remaining shortcut icons should be identifiable as generic symbols for the creation and deletion elements; in this case the layer states themselves.

The animation principle

With frame-based animation you can add the additional dimension of time to your artwork



.GIF, not .JPG

The only format that ImageReady is able to export to support animation is .GIF. However, with the latest CS version of the software it becomes possible to export the individual frames into the .SWF format, which can then be taken into Macromedia Flash for more advanced animation possibilities.

The concept of animation within the Photoshop and ImageReady environment may be alien to many, but grasping the basic idea is pretty straightforward. In some respects the principle bears many similarities to the Rollover method that we've just looked at. You create snapshots, or frames, that define a moment in time in which you can make adjustments to the layer content or positioning to simulate movement.

Whether this takes on a lateral motion like our diagram below

illustrates, or is used to cycle a sequence of images is up to you. It can be tempting to get carried away with over-ambitious ideas, but you must remember that each frame adds considerable weight to the original image so keep animated content small and simple.

There are plenty of examples of animated .GIFs to be seen online, and despite their cheesy reputation they *can* add some interesting detail. Just remember to approach your design with some consistency and a liberal helping of subtlety.

AN ANIMATED EXAMPLE

Understanding animation, frame by frame

Animation is based around frames that denote a moment in time. The image here shows a simple animation of a ball moving laterally from left to right across a static background. With each frame, the ball travels a little further, pausing for a fraction of a second before the next frame displays, creating the illusion of movement. The amount of time between frames is so short that the eye is tricked into seeing movement. To create a smoother animation more frames need to be added, but doing so would require each frame to be displayed for a shorter increment in time, otherwise the ball will appear to be moving at a slower pace.



The Animation palette clearly shows the frame-based movement of the ball across the background

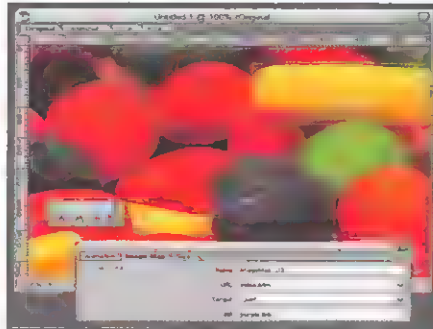
Getting around Image Maps

While animations and rollovers have close ties, image maps are more similar to slices

HTML dictates that sliced images must be rectangular, and this rule determines the shape of the majority of graphic elements that form a link. The only exception to this rule, outside of the Flash .SWF format, is to use 'image maps'.

An image map defines a region that acts as a link but has the advantage of supporting complex shapes. This is achieved through HTML code, which defines the coordinates of an active link area.

ImageReady provides a range of tools listed below that allow the



Using Image Mapping we can define irregular-shaped links within an image, controlling their attributes via the Image Map palette

creation of image maps, and it even has a dedicated Image Map palette to help set up your hotspots.



Circles from the centre

By default, the Circle Image Map tool will draw a region contained within the dragged area – if you prefer to draw a circle from the centre simply hold down the [Alt] key as you create the selection.

IMAGE MAPPING TOOLS

- ☐ **THE IMAGE MAPPING TOOLS** are grouped within the ImageReady toolbar to the left of the Slice tool. They create similar results but Image Mapping is primarily used for creating irregular-shaped links or hotspots.
- ☐ **THE RECTANGLE IMAGE MAP** tool provides the most basic control, defining a rectangular shape that will be defined as a linking region.
- ☐ **THE CIRCLE IMAGE MAP** tool offers the same kind of feature, but this time for rounded shapes. This would be impossible to slice given the limitations of HTML.
- ☐ **THE POLYGON IMAGE MAP** tool enables you to create by far the most complex shapes. The mapped region is defined in the same way as you might create a selection with the Polygonal Lasso tool.
- ☐ **THE IMAGE MAP SELECTION** tool should be used with existing mapped areas to further edit the dimensions or proportions of a shape.



Hiding maps

Don't forget the additional option within the ImageReady tool bar, which allows visual identifiers such as slices and mapped image areas to be temporarily hidden from view.

Chapter 5

CREATING INTERACTIVE IMAGES

The humble hypertext link is what makes the Internet more than just a collection of static pages, but with JavaScript we can make image links a more obvious interface design element

When HTML was originally developed it was used by academics and government organisations to deliver plain text-based documents with minimal formatting. However, even these dry documents were in need of imagery to illustrate arguments and findings. So when the Mosaic browser was introduced in 1994 to support the image tag, the medium started to find a new audience, as more commercial and entertainment-based content started to become available.

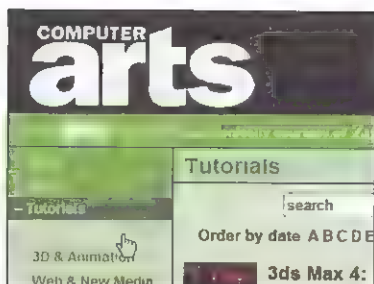
But despite HTML's advantages in terms of being easy to author and understand, the language has very limited capability. It wasn't until

JavaScript was developed by Netscape to enhance the potential behind the mark-up language that we started to see the emergence of more dynamic content online.

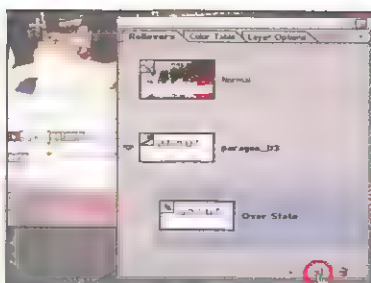
Rollover images

One of the first, and most commonly used, pieces of JavaScript developed was used to control the action of a rollover image. The principal allows a regular image to be replaced by another of the same dimensions as the cursor is passed over, before returning to the original image when the cursor is moved away again.

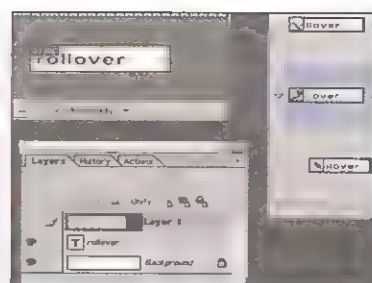
The principal has since become a standard method of indicating a link



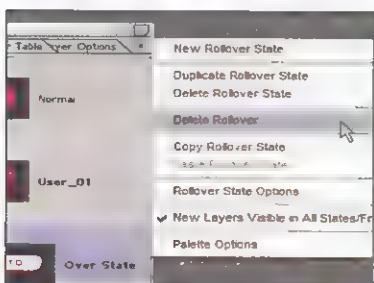
Page 52 Discover the difference between an 'Out' and 'Over' state



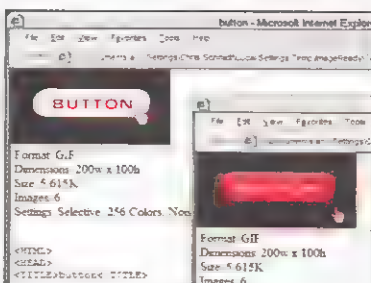
Page 53 Discover how to define Rollover regions and create button states



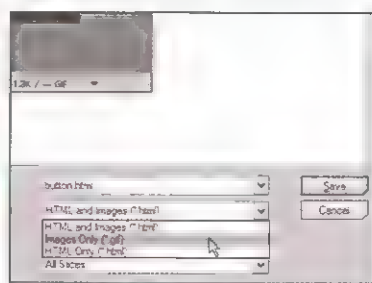
Page 54 Walk through the process of creating a basic rollover from scratch



Page 57 Make the most of the Rollover palette by mastering its contextual menu



Page 58 Ensure your rollovers work by previewing them in your browser



Page 59 Once you've completed your settings, save and optimise your work

and is now used as an indication of this function in all sorts of interface design, from software to DVDs.

The method allows the user to easily identify where links appear without clicking randomly around a page, or waiting to see whether their cursor turns into the hand icon.

The Adobe method

Because JavaScript is often beyond the bounds of the average designer, we have come to see various applications support the creation of JavaScript elements without any coding experience being necessary and Photoshop – or rather ImageReady – is no exception.

Photoshop's web cousin takes on the responsibility of creating rollover content and allows you to concentrate on the design of your navigation without having to concern yourself with coding.

Once you're happy with your design, the page or image can then be exported with the JavaScript in place. You can build around these elements using your regular HTML authoring application, or just cut and paste them into an existing page.

In this chapter you'll discover everything you need to know to create JavaScript content and add a touch of class to your page layouts, bringing interface elements to life.

Recognising rollover states

Can't tell your 'Out' from your 'Over' state?
Read on and it will all become clear...



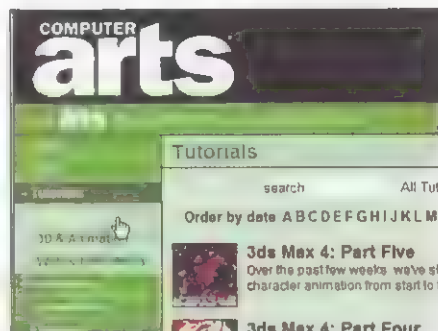
Browser variations

Different web browsers – and even different versions of browsers – may process clicks and double-clicks differently. To ensure the pages you create function as anticipated, it is recommended that you test them using as many different browsers as possible.

With rollover images you need to be aware of the 'state' of your dynamic links, which reflects how the link has been used so far. The different states are usually triggered by interaction with the mouse cursor; so the most basic state, known as 'Normal', is visible by default when the cursor is nowhere near the image.

The second most common state is displayed when your cursor passes over the image in question – this is logically named the 'Over' state.

There are plenty more states



Although similar in function, using CSS allows similar results to the graphic rollover by changing the properties of text links

available (see below), although you may find yourself using only Normal and Over with much regularity.



Advanced states

A further Custom state can be recalled when the user performs an action defined in the corresponding JavaScript code. However, such code must be manually created, so some knowledge of JavaScript must be assumed before a Custom state can be applied.

COMMON ROLLOVER STATES

NORMAL AND OVER are the most frequently used rollover states.

These are used to define the default image and the image that's triggered when your cursor passes over the link respectively.

THE DOWN state is activated while the user actually clicks on the link image, revealing an additional state to the Normal and Over images.

WHEN THE mouse button is then released a fourth state can be prompted. This is known as the Release state, which usually acts as the actual trigger to perform the link action.

A SELECTED state can be used to act rather like a radio button, in that it will remain active until another button is selected.

THE OUT AND UP states are lesser-used options used to prompt an event when the cursor moves away from a link image, or when the mouse is released over a link image.

Defining rollovers areas

To get started with rollovers you need to know how to define the area that triggers the effect

To create a rollover effect you need to decide on the region of your image that will prompt the effect. If you're creating individual buttons from scratch then you may choose to use the entire canvas, sized at the required dimensions. However, if you're planning on adding a rollover feature into an existing design, you'll need to consider how to restrict the effect to a particular region.

There are two methods of doing this; image maps, which we'll look at in greater detail in Chapter 7,

and slices. Both have their strengths and weaknesses dependent on the situation, but generally the most efficient method for creating link regions is slices. This is because a slice will define a self-contained image that's much smaller in terms of file size, as well as having the advantage of being easily reusable in other areas of the site.

With a region of your image defined, the act of creating an alternative state for the image is as simple as using the shortcut icons from the Rollover palette.



Consistent effects

If you're slicing an image that contains a navigation bar you may want to consider more subtle methods of making the rollover apparent. A simple change of text colour is often more than enough, whereas creating more defined button shapes is often best achieved by building such elements from scratch.

WHEN TO USE IMAGE MAPS

Why slicing is the preferred method of assigning a region

Using an image map to create rollovers is not very common. This method requires an alternative of the entire image to be recreated, which will increase the file size considerably. You might choose to use an image map over smaller images to constrain the link action to a specific region, but with larger layouts this can quickly become inefficient if your rollover relies on multiple states, as individual files become necessary for each state. For this reason, it's quite rare to find a rollover that's triggered through a mapped region. In most instances individual images are sliced, which results in much faster download and response times.



With a region defined, a rollover state is created using the shortcut icons at the foot of the Rollovers palette

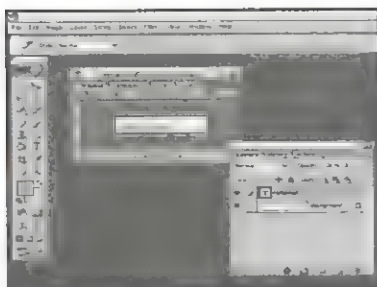
Creating rollover content

Walk through the process of creating a rollover graphic – you'll see how easy the task can be!

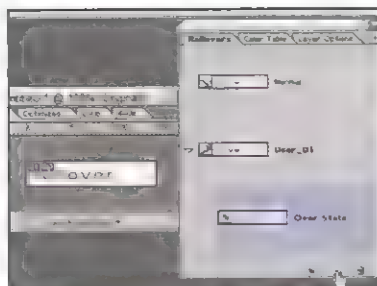


Defining through slices

The process we've used here creates individual graphics that might be used for navigation buttons. However, exactly the same process can be applied to larger layouts simply by defining the region that acts as the rollover using the Slice tool first.



Create a simple button in Photoshop by creating a new file using the dimensions of 150x30 pixels with a resolution matching the monitor display at 72dpi. Leave the background white and add a text layer with some copy in a neutral colour to identify the button. Align this text to the left of the button area and transfer to ImageReady using the Jump To button at the foot of the toolbar.

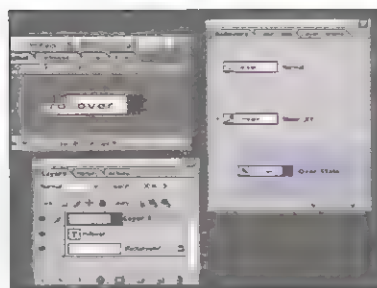


If it isn't already available, open up the Rollovers palette via the Windows menu and expand this so you can see the content. Click on the 'Create Rollover State' shortcut icon at the foot of the palette and you'll notice an Over state is created to duplicate your original image, and is nested inside the original.

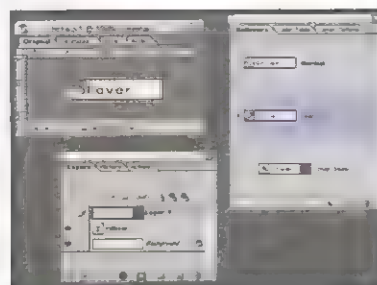


Amending titles

Changing text colour is another feature common to rollover buttons. You'll need to duplicate the text layer and make the necessary changes to that before creating and hiding the relevant layers, depending on which state they should be displayed.



To create the variation for the rollover button's Over state, create a new layer and make a selection to the right of the canvas. Fill this with the same colour as the main text. Notice how this applies itself to all the current states of the image by default. To get around this select the Normal state and hide the layer before returning to the Over state and making it visible.



You'll now see how the new layer only becomes visible when the Over state is selected, and so toggling between the Normal and Over layers within the Rollovers palette automatically hides and reveals the additional element. When the final image is exported this effect will be replicated as the mouse cursor passes over the graphic.

When not to slice

For more consistency between frequently-used graphics, you should try another approach

The previous walkthrough concentrated on creating an individual navigation button, but why should we do this when we've been considering slicing larger designs?

There's nothing wrong with slicing navigable elements from a larger layout design, although you may need to pay close attention to the dimensions of the individual graphics to retain consistency across multiple navigation buttons. Pro web designers tend to create separate files for this kind of navigation button, often using the same

principle as we did on the previous page, but simply changing the text to reflect the purpose of the button.

This way they can be assured that colour, dimensions and compression settings are consistent and avoid any irregularities that may occur as a result of images being created individually. It's also easier to keep the site up to date if you're using this method, because new navigation graphics can simply be created from a single file without you needing to slice a new layout each time your content changes.



Organised assets

When you're creating asset files that will contain your common graphics, don't forget to provide logical generic names so you can find and identify the files in future. Grouping layered buttons within Layer Sets is another way of making things easy to return to, should you need to recreate the buttons for a site six months down the line.

THE BROWSER CACHE

Recycle images throughout your site for faster loading

Another reason to create imagery that can be featured throughout your site is to ensure they fit into a standard layout. If we look at the illustration shown here it's clear that the navigation buttons contain excess space below the actual text, although this is necessary to recreate the page's table successfully. With more generic buttons, not only will the graphic be more efficient but it can also be referenced across various pages, taking advantage of the browser cache. This is a local folder that holds graphics and text from sites you have recently visited, which the browser calls upon to improve render speeds when you return a site.



Navigable elements sliced from a larger design will be inefficient for any page other than the original

Reducing space around rollovers

Make your rollover effects work more reliably by fine-tuning your linking regions



Padding images

Not only will tighter cropping remove excess pixels, but it also reduces the file size of an image to improve its optimisation. If you need to create space around your image in the final page you can always turn to HTML and specify margin or height widths around the graphic. Your web authoring software will enable you to do this.

When creating rollover graphics you'll need to pay close attention to the area that will trigger your link effect. It's no good, as we've illustrated here, having an effect that's triggered by surrounding pixels. In this case we need to crop closer around the intended link region to make the button behaviour a little more predictable.

Whether this is done by cropping the entire image or adjusting the slices within a layout depends on the design you're working on. If the linking graphic is part of a bigger



If your rollover image is not carefully cropped you run the risk of pixels that should be part of the background triggering the rollover

design you may, however, consider creating a layer-based rollover, as we've illustrated below.

CROPPING BUTTONS

If a button has been created as a single image the best option is to drag guides around the larger layer and crop the entire image.

Your layout is automatically sliced to correspond to the active layer with auto layers created around the primary rollover layer.

All that is then necessary is to create new layers and determine their visibility for the various states.



If, however, your graphics need to be considered as part of a bigger design, you can automate the rollover by selecting the background of your button.

The default expected rollover states are then generated around the selection with the Normal and Over states easily accessible.

You can then click on the 'Create Layer Based Rollover' button at the foot of the Rollover palette to create a pixel-perfect selection.

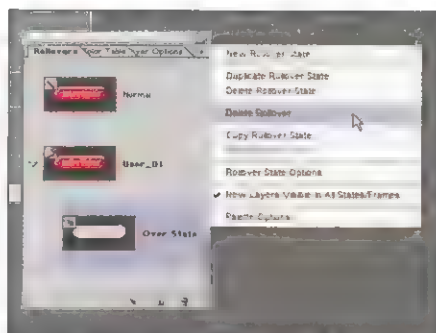
Rollover palette options

For greater control, the Rollover palette menu provides more general options

Contextual menus often provide powerful controls that are relevant to a particular palette, and the Rollover palette is no exception. To access the menu click on the small triangle contained in the top-right corner of a palette.

Options specific to an individual rollover state can be accessed by right-clicking on the state itself, but the palette options give you a little more control over general set-up and management of your rollovers.

We've outlined the fundamental operations below, but bear in mind



The Rollover palettes options can be accessed by clicking on the triangle contained within a circle in the top-right corner of the palette

that certain functions only become available once a particular rollover state is selected.



Seeing states

By default the Rollovers palette will display three states for a two-state button. Confusingly, this is because the state labelled *Normal* actually includes all slices and image maps that the overall image may rely on. Right-click the layer and uncheck the option and you'll only have the actual rollover layers available to you.

ROLLOVER PALETTE OPTIONS AVAILABLE

CREATING NEW and duplicate rollover states is available via the menu, to which ImageReady will associate the next most logical state by default.

IT IS ALSO possible to delete an entire rollover action or, if an individual state is selected, that too can be removed from the function.

COPYING and pasting rollover states can be a convenient way of duplicating particular preconfigured renders that you may want to apply to other states.

THE ROLLOVER State Options enables you to instantly change the action that triggers the rollover effect. The lower palette options, on the other hand, simply provide preferences for the display of your rollovers.

UNCHECKING the New Layers Visible option may make defining new state content a little more intuitive, as new content is then only applied to the current layer.



Get into a state

A quicker way of revising an existing state is to right-click on the layer and amend the Set State option.

Alternatively, simply double-click on the state layer to be presented with the rollover state options.

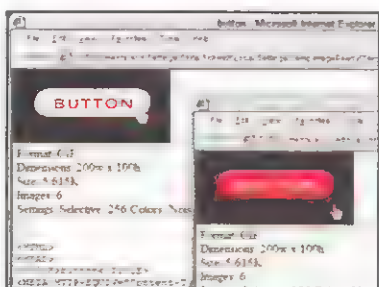
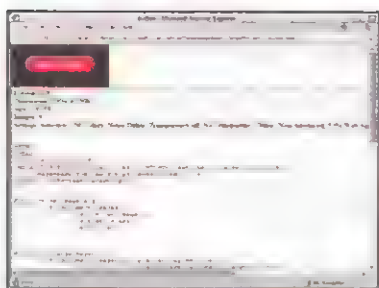
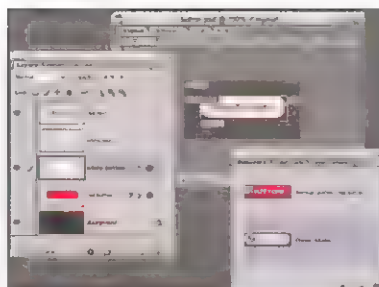
Previewing your rollover

Before you save your final rollover make sure it works within a web browser



button.psd

Use the button.psd to preview the final rollover effect through the browser. The image contains a simple button, whose text and background colours invert when the mouse is passed over the button area.



Open the button.psd file within ImageReady and take a moment to familiarise yourself with the layers used, paying attention to those displayed or hidden during the Normal and Over states. Create the slices by selecting one of the button layers and making use of the 'Create Layer Base Rollover' button at the foot of the Rollovers palette before configuring their behaviours.

The most immediate method of previewing the completed rollover is to turn to the toolbar and choose the 'Preview in Browser' icon, which should display the icon using your default browser. This can also be accessed via the File > Preview option. Click on this and ImageReady will mock up the files and code necessary to see the effect in action within your chosen browser.

The actual image and rollover are made available at the head of the page, along with various other pieces of information such as the file format of the graphics, their dimensions, collective file size and settings, along with the source code that ImageReady has created to make the effect available.

Pass your cursor over the image button at the head of the page and you should see the rollover effect in action. Notice also how the image reverts back once the cursor is passed away again, and that the sliced region defines a close crop around the button. This prevents the background pixels from triggering the rollover effect.



Other browsers

Any self-respecting web designer should have all the current versions of the major browsers installed on their computer, along with any popular previous versions such as the fourth generation Microsoft and Netscape browsers. To test your effect in an alternative browser, choose the File > Preview In > Other and locate the browser program directly from your system.

Saving rollover images

After all the hard work you'll want to save your work and export it as a working page

If you remember, we suggested that working within ImageReady can be likened to working directly within Photoshop's Save for Web feature, but with the benefit of the additional features that the software provides. With this in mind, you can use the Slice Select tool to activate slices and make use of the Optimize palette to squash the file size of your exported imagery.

Keep an eye on the status bar of your canvas for some indication of the file size and predicted download speed of your imagery.

Once you're happy you have the best settings, all that's necessary is to choose the File > Save Optimized As option and determine a final location for the generated assets.

The Save To dialogue enables you to locate the required directory, as well as offering a variety of saved formats. You can choose to save the entire page including HTML, or to save either aspect alone. You can also choose from familiar options for general settings, and slicing options which you should determine before finally saving your work.



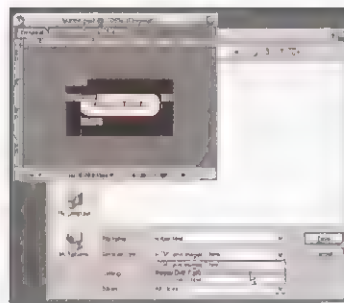
Selecting multiple slices

Rather than selecting and configuring each slice individually, you can select multiple slices by clicking and dragging across them, or by holding down the [Shift] while clicking on multiple slices in turn.

IMAGES ONLY

Why save your work without the containing HTML?

Giving you the options to save the optimised files either as HTML or images may seem rather limited, but it must be remembered that GoLive – the web authoring relative of Photoshop – doesn't enjoy the same dominant status as the image editing application. Many web designers prefer the Macromedia alternative, Dreamweaver, or even opt to hand-code their pages and create their own layouts. In these instances the Images Only option might be a better bet, enabling you to take advantage of ImageReady and Photoshop's workflow advantages in terms of slicing and optimising graphics, which your larger layouts rely on.



Once you're happy with your images you have options to export your assets as either HTML, Images or both

SLICE YOUR IMAGES USING IMAGEREADY

Photoshop's main interface can cope with slicing, but you'll have much better control over the feature by using ImageReady and its dedicated Slice palette...

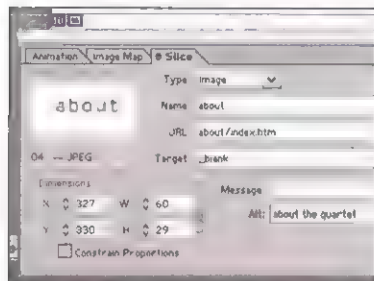
On the face of things, there's little difference between the way the Slice tools operate within Photoshop and ImageReady. Both tools are presented as options within the toolbar, with the regular Slice tool for the creation of slices and the Slice Selection tool for further editing of existing slices.

Despite these apparent similarities, there are a number of advantages to using the ImageReady environment. ImageReady is effectively a more advanced version of Photoshop's Save for Web feature, therefore it makes it easier to edit the content of a slice and modify the optimisation processes of individual slices.

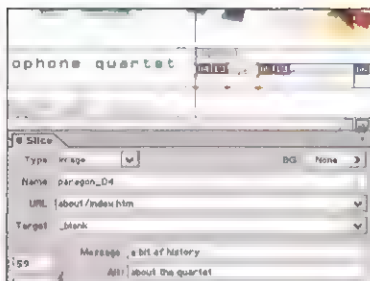
Using dedicated tools such as the Slice palette for example, which is always available, ImageReady makes it easy to fine-tune your images at any stage in the editing process. There's no need to visit the Save for Web feature or to run through a series of long-winded production stages for such fundamental access.

Target audience

You may wonder why Photoshop offers relatively few slicing options compared to ImageReady, but this is obvious when you consider the users who make regular use of the method. Slicing images and page layouts is a technique that's peculiar to web



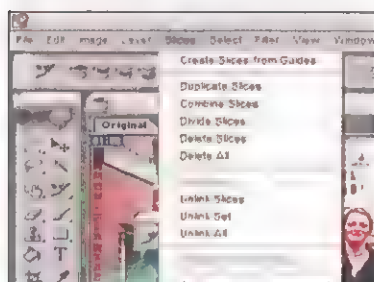
Page 62 The Slice palette provides access to the defined slice's content



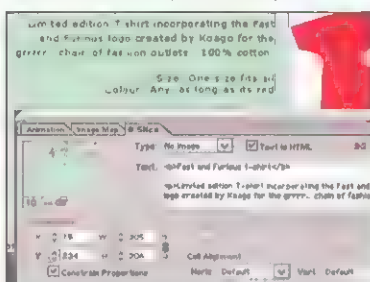
Page 63 Slicing within ImageReady is made easier through the Slice palette



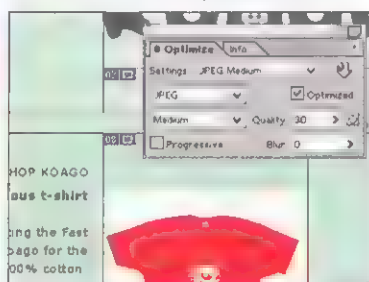
Page 65 ImageReady handles slice options more naturally than Photoshop



Page 66 Slices have their very own menu within the ImageReady interface



Page 67 Find out how to configure text content with this short walkthrough



Page 68 With slices set up, optimise the graphics that your layout relies on

design. That's because large images will mean larger file sizes, which in turn can increase the amount of time it takes to deliver a page.

Print designers and most other Photoshop users will rarely, if ever, have cause to use ImageReady. The only limitations they will face will be on the physical size of the paper they're using. So, to keep the main Photoshop interface nice and tidy for the majority of users, these web-specific features are neatly tucked away within ImageReady.

ImageReady advantages

With this in mind it makes perfect sense that Adobe opted to leave the

brunt of the Slicing capabilities within Photoshop's web design relative. Not only does the Slice palette allow constant access to all those essential tools for configuring your web images, but the dedicated Slices menu found within ImageReady adds the kind of features that go way beyond anything that can be found within the parent title.

Over the next chapter you should get a much clearer idea of what ImageReady's essential Slice tools can do, and how it can save you huge amounts of time when it comes round to converting your designs into functional pages.

The Slice palette

Desktop control over your image's slices is available through this dedicated tool...

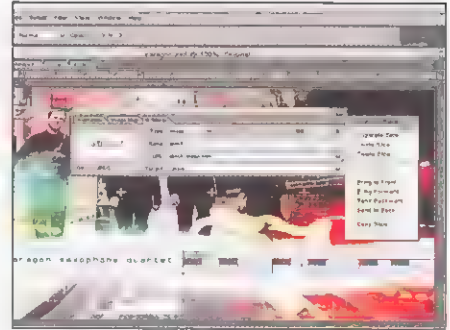


Tear-off tools

A useful feature that ImageReady boasts over Photoshop is the ability to free-float grouped tools. Do this by clicking on the wide button contained at the foot of each group of tools and you'll find mini-palettes become available for quick access to various tools, such as the Slice options.

When you're working with slices you can choose to work within the main Photoshop application or use ImageReady. The main advantage of ImageReady is that it has a dedicated Slice palette for controlling the output of your slices. This is an essential option for web designers, and is grouped with related options such as the Animation and Image Map palettes.

We've outlined the features of this powerful palette below. Notice that we've expanded the interface to reveal the additional options offered



The default Slice palette options provide basic controls, but selecting Show Options from the palette's menu will expand your potential

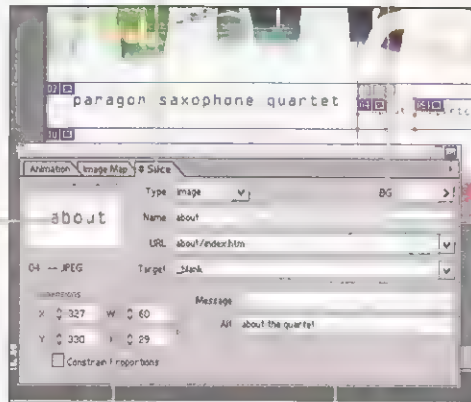
via the palette's contextual menu bar. In Normal mode only the top half of these options would be visible.

THE SLICE PALETTE EXPLAINED

The Slice palette is grouped together with the Animation and Image Map equivalents. Access these through the Window menu if not already available.

A preview is displayed within the palette to provide some indication of the sliced area, along with a summary of the format and its position within the larger table.

Advanced options include the ability to adjust the dimensions of the slice, as well as fine-tuning its positioning via the X and Y coordinate values.



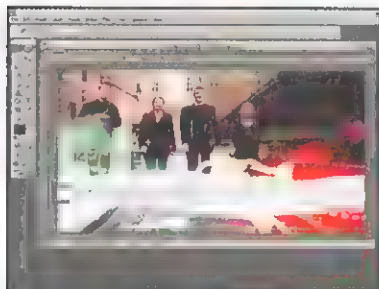
The opening options allow you to determine whether the slice content should be presented as an image or not, and what the background colour should be.

The fundamental attributes for an individual slice include the name of the image, as well as the address and destination window for any links.

Alt(ernate) text is an important field for creating accessible content, while the Message field specifies content made available to the browser's status bar.

Creating slices in ImageReady

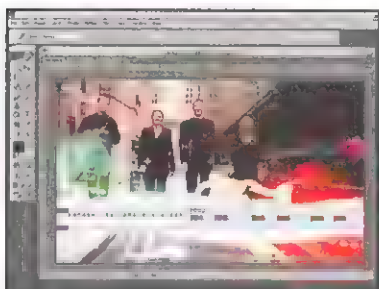
Slicing your images using ImageReady is far easier than using Photoshop alone



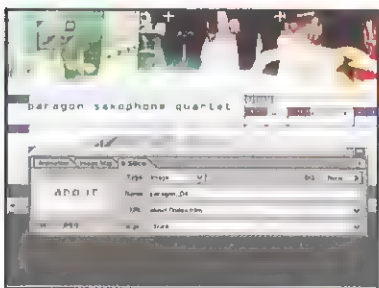
If you followed our walkthrough on creating slices with Photoshop (Chapter 2), you'll already have a good idea of how the slice principal works. Open the **paragon.psd** image and select the Slice tool from the toolbar to get started. Make sure the image's guides are visible by selecting the **View > Show > Guides** option and create an initial slice from the top and bottom of the image.



paragon.psd
You'll find the image file that we have used here on your CD-ROM.



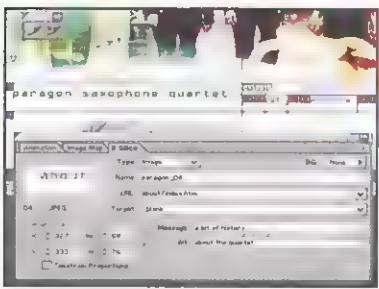
Continue the process with the Slice tool to create individual graphics around the site title and the individual navigation graphics, as shown here. Keep reasonably close to the actual text content without creating overly large graphics. Once the initial slices are in place you can use the Slice Select tool, as you did with Photoshop, to select individual graphics for further configuration.



Unlike Photoshop, ImageReady provides additional control for setting up your slices. Bring up the Slice palette via the Window menu (if it's not already available) and you'll find a number of options to cater for the task. Select the slice containing the About link and enter a relative address for the page into the URL field. You've pretty much finished the task now, although you can still define a target where your link will load.



Targeting links
If you associate a link with one of your slices, you are given a number of options to determine the destination for the link. By default the new page will load within the same browser window as the original link. However, if you select the **_blank** option a new page will be opened, while the **_self**, **_parent** and **_top** options are more relevant when working with HTML frames.



For additional Slice palette options you can toggle the Show Options listing found under the Slice palette's contextual menu bar. This expands the features available to include Alt text, which will be understood by screen readers. The Message field enables you to enter text that will display within the browser's status bar, while the Dimensions field provides more precise methods of amending the size and position of a slice.

Editing slices

You can rearrange, resize and delete your slices as you develop your page layouts



Constrained Proportions

This option, found grouped with the Dimensions within the Slice palette, will lock the relative dimensions of an existing slice. Bear in mind, however, that this will only apply when entering new dimensions within the Slice palette – if you decide to manually adjust the slice using the Slice Select tool this will be over-ridden.

Even with a page exported to HTML you can still make further changes to the original .PSD file quite easily by making use of the Slice Select tool and the Slice palette.

Resizing slices is as simple as selecting an existing slice with the Slice Select tool and dragging the anchor points to suit your preference. This method automatically revises the overall slice layout, amending any existing auto slices, for example.

Similarly, within both Photoshop and ImageReady, you can also click and drag a selected slice to position

it elsewhere. Again, any surrounding slices will readjust automatically.

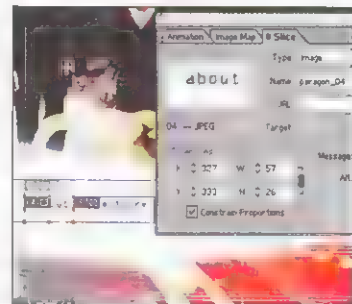
For more precise control over your slice's position you can use the arrow keys. This can be a useful way to accurately align slices that will share the same row within your final HTML table layout, for example.

But for the ultimate control over your slices' positioning you'll need to turn to ImageReady's Slice palette. The additional options in this palette's menu give you access to a range of controls that can't be found within Photoshop itself.

POSITIONING SLICES

Understanding the difference by X,Y,W and H

If your layout relies on precise measurements or you simply want more control over your final exported table, then the Dimensions options found in the expanded version of the Slice palette may be just what you're looking for. The W and H fields are the most apparent, providing controls over the width and height of a selected slice, while the X and Y determine the pixel-perfect positioning of your slice. These measurements dictate the upper-left corner of the current slice and can be used to create more efficient tables by ensuring related graphics, such as our navigation bar, follow a uniform alignment, for example.



The Slice palette's Dimensions options provide pixel-perfect control over the positioning and of an active slice

Fixing slice sizes

Creating fixed dimensions for your slices can help keep your layout consistent

Creating slices by eye is an easy task, but it can result in a less-than-perfect HTML table. Bearing in mind that HTML is a linear mark-up language, it's best to keep your slices within some kind of uniform grid pattern to avoid complex tables that may trip up older browsers.

One solution is to use guides to help define the size and position of your slices. Alternatively, you could make use of the Slice tool's option bar settings. From here you can set a fixed size or a fixed aspect ratio at which your slices will be created.

Another option is to duplicate your layers using similar tricks that you might employ when working with layer content. Holding down [Alt] whilst clicking and dragging a slice will automatically duplicate the active slice and position the copy where it is dropped, for example.

Whichever method you use, you'll almost certainly need to remove the odd slice when things don't go to plan. The Edit > Undo method is a good start, but for existing slices the easiest method of deletion is to click on the slice and simply hit [Delete].



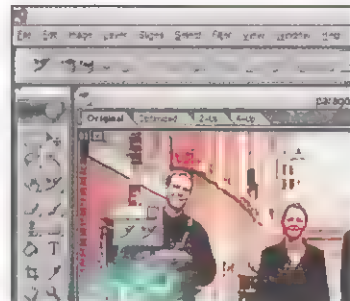
Snap-tastic

In both Photoshop and ImageReady, you may find it useful to keep the View > Snap option checked when creating slices. Any duplicated or dragged slices will then automatically attach themselves to any existing boundaries – whether existing slices or guides – helping to create more efficient HTML tables.

SUBSLICES

Understanding what happens when slices overlap

So far we've considered User Slices (those defined when using the Slice tool) and Auto Slices (which fill in the gaps between). There is also a third type known as a 'Subslice' which is generated when you create overlapping slices. Despite being numbered and displaying a slice symbol, subslices cannot be edited directly, because their dimensions are determined by the surrounding slices that created them. Subslices may cause confusion at first, but remember the Slice Select tools in both Photoshop and ImageReady provide options to arrange the stacking order of your slices, which should help to clarify the hierarchy of such elements.



With the Slice Select tool active the stacking options become available within the tool's Options bar

The Slices menu

Slices are an essential tool for web designers, so ImageReady has a menu dedicated to them

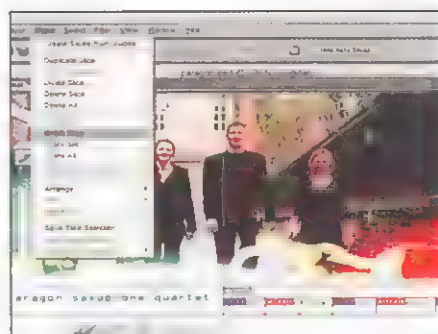


Quick access

In common with all the menus, you can access the Slices menu quickly by holding down the [Alt] key before hitting the corresponding (underlined) letter of the menu item in question. With the Slices menu this is the [C] key, because the [S] key is reserved for the Select option.

The ability to slice images is undoubtedly an important feature when designing web content, because it enables large images to be divided into more usable and downloadable chunks. However, print designers and photographers – along with the vast majority of other Photoshop users – will rarely use the feature, which goes some lengths to explaining why Slicing is best controlled by using ImageReady.

In fact, the principle is so crucial to web designers that ImageReady boasts a dedicated menu just for



More advanced options are possible through the Slices menu, such as the ability to link together slices, which are then indicated by the chain icon

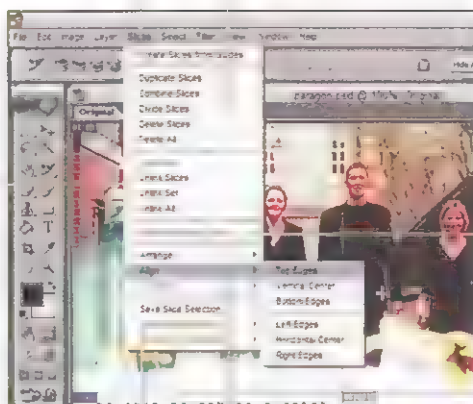
controlling slices. This menu offers some advanced controls that you won't find in the main application.

UNDERSTANDING THE SLICES MENU

The initial options available under the Slices menu allows you to automatically create slices based around any guides applied to your image.

The ability to link slices ensures that if you move one slice, any connected slices will move with it.

Once an image has been sliced you can protect the arrangement by saving the slice selection. You can then load this at a later time if you wish.



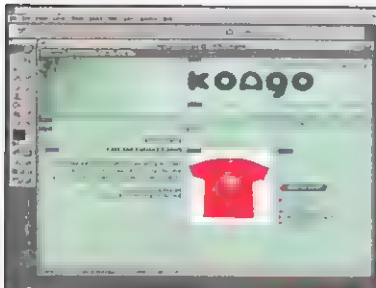
Common commands for the duplication and deletion of your slices are available in this part of the menu, along with more flexible controls for combining and dividing your existing slices.

'Promote to User Slices' becomes available when an auto slice is selected. It's useful if you wish to retain the dimensions or attributes that an auto slice contains.

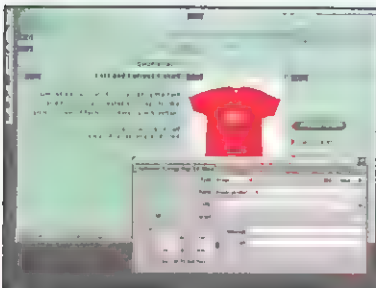
The related stacking order, positioning and distribution options are grouped together with sub-menus for specific commands.

Adding HTML text to slices

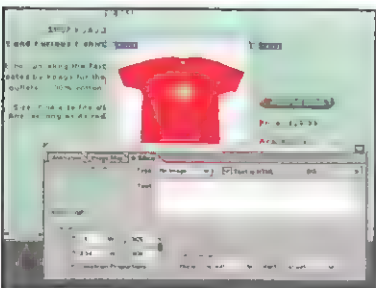
HTML text helps to keep content current and recognisable to search engines



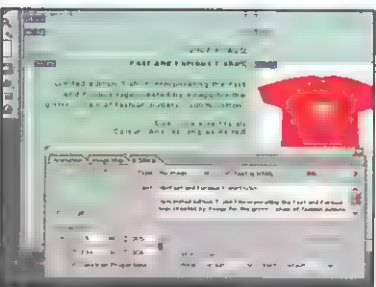
1 Open **koago_product.psd** (on the CD) within ImageReady. This is a typical web page layout – take a moment to familiarise yourself with the structure. If the slices aren't visible check the **View > Extras** option and make sure the **View > Show > Slices** option is checked. You should be able to tell which elements will stay as graphics and which must be converted to HTML text in the final layout.



2 An actual conversion would be slightly more complex, because of the way the embedded graphics would need generating independently, but we'll concentrate on the main body text describing the t-shirt. Select the corresponding slice using the **Slice Select** tool and turn to the **Slice palette** to make the necessary changes.



3 By default, ImageReady assumes that all slices should be rendered as images, but in this case we want it to contain text. Choose the **No Image** option from the **Type** drop-down and the palette changes accordingly. A text field appears, into which you can enter your copy. But before you do that amend the **BG** field to match the background colour used within the cell (**#BEE7E1**).



4 If you have a basic understanding of HTML you can give yourself a headstart with the text by embedding basic HTML tags such as the **bold** and **<p>paragraph</p>** elements we've included here. With the **'Text is HTML'** option checked, the text is then embedded to provide the basic layout formatting. You can then use your HTML authoring software to finalise your layout.



koago_product.psd
Use the **koago_product.psd** file to continue with this walkthrough. The flattened layout has already been sliced and contains both graphical and text content. We'll need to configure this so that the generated page renders the text as HTML.



Defining background colours

The drop-down colour options available through the **BG** field list web-safe colours by default. To choose an alternative you'll need to choose the **Other** option, which prompts the standard **Color Picker** to define your preferred hue. However, you can quickly access the same feature by clicking directly within the area to the left of the drop-down arrow.

Optimising slices

Once your layout has been sliced, optimise each slice to make the fastest page possible



Preview in ImageReady

If you're not sure how your optimised settings might affect the actual rendered version then simply hit the 2-Up tab at the head of the canvas. This displays the original and optimised versions side-by-side. If your design is too big or your screen resolution won't accommodate such a luxury, just use the Optimized view by itself and toggle over to gauge the difference.



Auto conversion

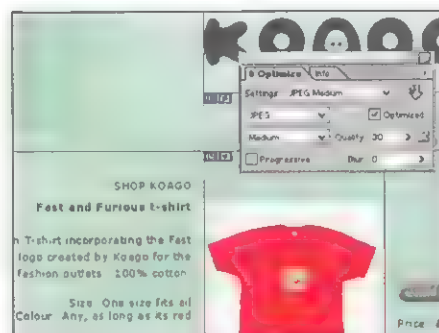
If you're still not sure about the best way to go about optimising the layout then consider using the 'Optimize to File Size' option found under the Optimize palette's menu. From here you can determine the final file size your page should be limited to, as well as making use of the Auto Select GIF/JPEG option to let ImageReady make such decisions for you.

By slicing up your images and setting up the links or HTML content, you can deliver your work much more efficiently online.

However, if the individual graphics haven't been optimised efficiently, they could still appear distorted.

Unlike Photoshop's Save for Web dialogue, ImageReady has optimisation controls that are always available via the Optimize palette.

Use the Slice Select tool to activate individual slices and modify the optimisation controls using the techniques you picked up back in



Options on offer in the Optimize dialogue will depend on your chosen format – it's just like the the Save for Web dialogue back in Chapter 3

Chapter 3. Just remember to choose the most suitable format for the image and half the job is done for you!

OPTIMISATION SETTINGS

THE DROP-DOWN options at the head of the Optimize palette determine the file format best suited for the graphic being optimised. Your choice of format will influence the available options, although the preconfigured options are fully editable.

THE .JPEG method enables you to create low, medium, high and maximum quality images, while the Blur and Progressive options should be familiar from using the Save for Web feature within Photoshop.

THE .GIF options also provide a range of controls that you've already seen in Photoshop's Save for Web tool. If you're not sure which options you should adjust, concentrate on reducing colour from the default settings.

THE .PNG methods vary depending on whether you're converting to .PNG-24 or .PNG-8, but both variants have their comparisons with the .GIF and JPEG options, as you might expect.

Saving your slices

Save your work for exporting, and ensure that you can return and make changes in future

Once you've gone through the processes of slicing, configuring and optimising your page layout, you'll be ready to export the final results. Fortunately, this too is a straightforward task made available through the File > Save Optimized As option, which presents a familiar dialogue screen.

From here you can determine the location and file name of the central HTML file or, if you prefer, choose to save the results as HTML or images only. Once you've made the necessary decision simply hit the

Save button and ImageReady will process the file for you, creating the individual graphics and HTML to piece them back together again.

Your HTML file is now ready for you to adapt further with the more specialised options of a dedicated HTML authoring package such as Adobe GoLive (see CD), but much of the coding can be completed entirely within ImageReady itself.

Be sure to save your original artwork in the .PSD format so you can return to the file in future with your defined slices already in place.



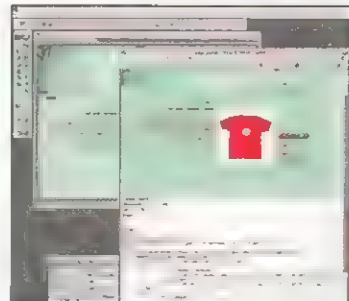
Averting the unexpected

The most common errors you'll face when exporting sliced pages are overlapping pages or overly complex table layouts. You can easily fix these by using the available options within the Slice Select tools options bar or by simplifying the page layout into a more regular sliced grid pattern.

PREVIEWING YOUR PAGE

Still not sure whether your page is up to scratch?

Until your confidence improves you may want to preview your layout within a browser before saving your work. ImageReady's Preview options are quite apparent – particularly the 'Preview in Default Browser' button found below the Color Swatch in the toolbar. Internet Explorer is the most common browser, so you'll probably find the button adopts the familiar 'e' icon. Hit this and ImageReady will mock up the page complete with the containing HTML and graphics. This helps you to detect any problems with your layout. You'll also have access to the raw HTML below this, so you can see how your page is constructed.



Preview your pages within the browser, along with the supporting HTML code for the page

FINDING YOUR WAY AROUND IMAGE MAPS

Image mapping was one of the first methods of adding functionality to web graphics. Plotting the coordinates used to be trial and error, but ImageReady removes the guesswork

Like slices, image maps are another feature provided by ImageReady that is of specific relevance to web designers. The method is unique to HTML, which explains why there is no support for the feature within Photoshop itself.

However, within the dedicated web design environment of ImageReady we can find plenty of tools and features for creating, modifying and saving image maps. These tools add a level of functionality that would ordinarily be impossible to achieve.

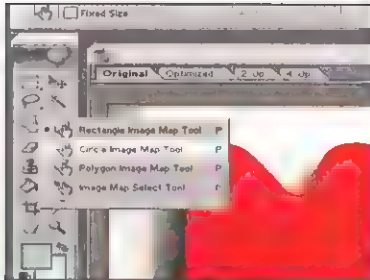
You create an image map by plotting co-ordinates to an existing image. The defined area becomes a link – or hotspot – to take you to

other parts of an image, or to a different destination altogether. The same kind of results might be achieved by slicing a larger image, but there are numerous unique advantages to the mapping method.

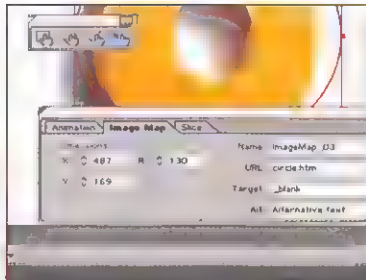
When maps matter

Slicing is a very destructive act to carry out on an image, and although this may be necessary for presenting larger layouts, it might not be required for smaller graphics such as page headers or banner ad graphics.

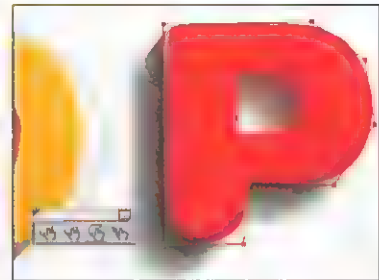
In such cases, if you want to associate a link to a specific region of your image you are best turning to image maps. The method not only



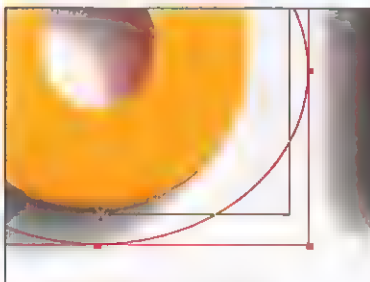
Page 72 Get to know the tools you need for working with image maps



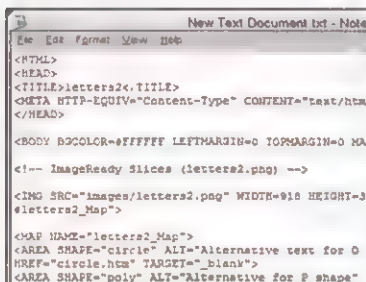
Page 73 The Image Map palette is crucial in setting up your web graphics



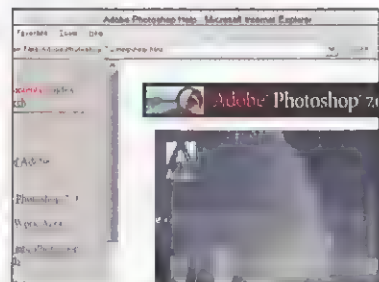
Page 74 Learn to create an image map using the three shapes available



Page 75 Understand how to amend your image maps with a few trade secrets



Page 77 Find out what's going on under the browser's bonnet with raw HTML



Page 78 Get to grips with targets and frames using Photoshop's Help files

enables you to leave your image in its original form, but has much greater flexibility.

Whereas a sliced image is made up of a grid of rectangular shapes, an image map can be defined as virtually any two-dimensional shape. Of course, you can create regular squares and rectangles, which are synonymous with graphical links, but the ability to define circular and even polygonal hotspots is unique to image mapping.

Cut out the guesswork

Netscape introduced image maps while the browser wars were raging and it was quickly established as a

standard web element. The initial advantage behind the method allowed designers to target specific elements within a graphic to trigger a link. For example, you might have a banner ad that enables the user to click directly on products of various size and shape, which then take the user directly to a relevant page.

However, during the early days the only way to define image maps was by hand-coding, which meant a fair bit of guesswork was involved in defining the coordinates. More complex shapes would often take some time to recreate accurately, but fortunately ImageReady now makes the process much more efficient...

Image mapping tools

ImageReady has a collection of tools to help you create your first image maps

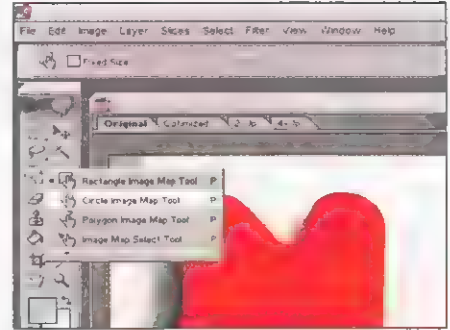


Float your tools

As with any of ImageReady's nested tool sets, don't forget you can float the tools free of the tool bar by using the button at the foot of the grouped tools. This provides direct access to the available options, which can be reverted back to the tool bar when you've finished making your changes.

Thankfully, ImageReady makes the creation of mapped regions as simple as making an ordinary selection within Photoshop. You'll find all the tools you need sitting next to the Slice tools in the toolbar, with dedicated tools for the three main functions we've outlined below.

The tools are so simple to use that the only related options available – when either the rectangle or circle variants are selected – is that of fixing your area's dimensions. The Polygonal Image Map tool has no additional options available at all.



You'll find the Image Map tools grouped together next to the Slice tools within the ImageReady toolbar

Other than that you'll find it's just a simple case of clicking and dragging to define the link region.



Centre your circle

When defining a circular region for a mapped area you'll often find it easier to create a more reliable circle from the central point. To do this, hold down the [Alt] key (Windows) or the [Option] key (Mac).

THE INDIVIDUAL TOOLS

THE RECTANGULAR IMAGE MAP tool is the most basic on offer and enables you to define a region by clicking and dragging the opposing corners of the rectangular shape.

THE CIRCLE IMAGE MAP tool operates in a similar way to the equivalent marquee or shape tools, although you will always create a perfect circle – ellipse shapes are not possible.

THE POLYGON IMAGE MAP tool has similarities to the equivalent Lasso tool within Photoshop, and allows you to create more complex shapes than the other variants. You can create shapes with multiple points – only when the two end points are conjoined is the region defined.

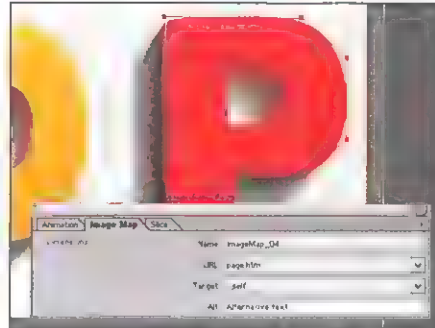
THE IMAGE MAP SELECT tool is used to select individual mapped regions that have already been defined, allowing you to edit and adjust them through the dedicated Image Map palette.

The Image Map palette

Once you've defined your mapped region, head to the Image Map palette to configure it

As with the Slice tools, ImageReady provides a dedicated palette to help create your maps. In fact, if you've already gone through the previous chapter where we looked at the Slice palette, many of the features in the Image Map palette should be familiar to you.

Once a region has been mapped it can be activated using the Image Map Select tool. Any attributes you enter into the relevant fields here will then apply to the specified area. These include the URL field, into which you must enter the destination



The dimensions of shapes defined with the Polygon tool don't feature within the palette. Any adjustments need to be carried out directly

to which your hotspot links. It can be entered as an 'absolute' address or one that's 'relative' to the page.



Absolute or relative?

If a web address, or URL, is 'relative' to the page it will locate the given file in relation to the current page.

So, a link defined as page.htm references a file within the same folder as the original page.

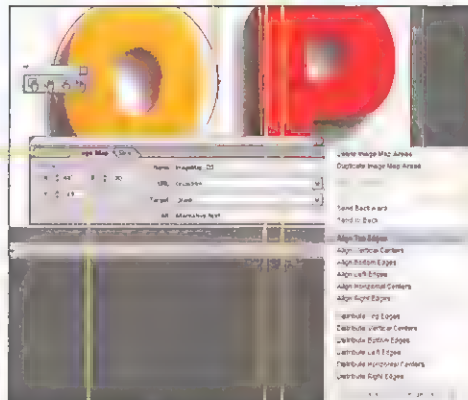
An absolute address, on the other hand, is used when directing a link to another server and will require the full URL including the 'HTTP' prefix such as: <http://www.computerarts.co.uk>

THE IMAGE MAP PALETTE

A selected Image Map is indicated with a red border, as seen here around the circle. Inactive mapped regions are shown in blue.

The Image Map palette is grouped with the Animation and Slice equivalents. It can be accessed via the Window menu if not currently available.

The dimensions can be amended if necessary through the palette – in this case the circle is selected, providing access to the X and Y position as well as the radius.



The crucial information that needs embedding is the URL or web address. The Name field can be changed if necessary, although this is mostly for coding purposes and can be left alone.

The palette's contextual menu offers a few additional controls for the alignment and distribution of your mapped regions.

Like the Slice palette, the Target field defines the browser window into which the link will load, while the Alt text enables you to associate text with the link region.

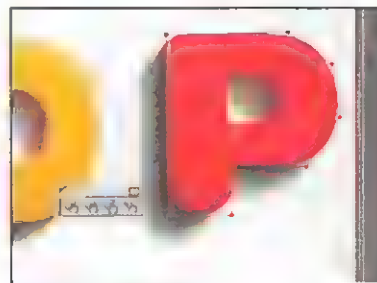
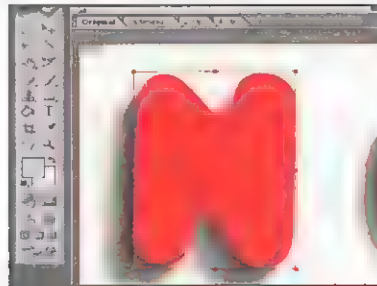
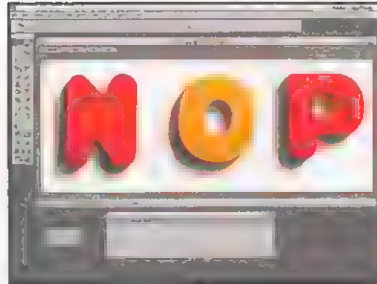
Creating image map content

Let's create a simple mapped region and familiarise ourselves with how the tools work



letters.jpg

Use the letters.jpg file to follow this walkthrough. The image contains a selection of children's alphabet block, around which we can make use of the three image mapping definition tools.



Open the letters.jpg file (on your disc) within ImageReady and consider how we might map such objects. The 'O' is an obvious choice for the circle tool, while the 'N' can be reasonably covered by the rectangle. The 'P' is a little more complex, containing both straight and curved regions, so for this we'll make use of the Polygon Image Map tool to get the most effective results.

First, let's consider the 'N' shape and dig out the Rectangle Image Map tool. Drag from the top-left corner to the bottom-right and you'll notice a bounding box appear. Once the letter is contained within the box release the mouse button and you'll see the mapped region active and defined by the red box, which adds a little opacity to the image. This will not appear on the exported image.

The 'O' shaped link can be done in much the same way, but using the Circle Image Map tool. However, getting an accurate position this way may take a little trial and error, so instead hold down the [Alt] (Windows) or [Option] (Mac) keys before clicking and dragging from the centre of the shape. Your circle is now created outward from this point, making it easier to cover the area.

The final 'P' shape is better suited to the Polygon Image Map tool, so select this and start by clicking by the top-right corner of the shape. Follow the shape's edge, clicking at corner points to establish anchor points. Try not to create too many anchor points or your exported code will be too complex. When you reach your starting point the cursor will show the completion with a small circle alongside it.

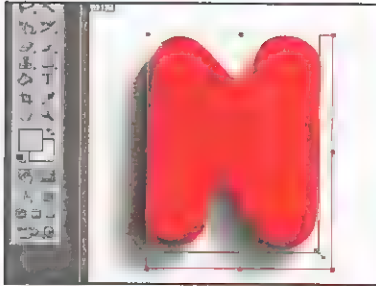


Lines and curves

It is impossible to merge curves and straight lines through Image Maps – this is a limitation of HTML rather than the software itself. However, you can easily get round such issues using the Polygon Image Map tool and roughly enclosing such complex shapes. Bear in mind that most users clicking on a link will aim for the centre.

Editing image map content

Once a map is in place you'll inevitably want to tweak things to suit your evolving designs

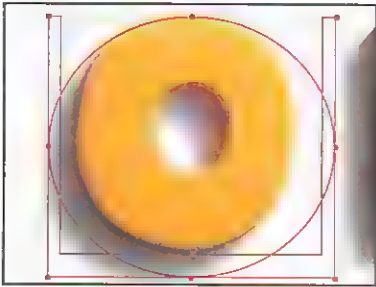


Either continue from the previous page or use the letters2.psd file from the CD to complete the following steps. Amending a rectangular mapped region is a simple task requiring only the Image Map Select tool. Click on the map around the 'N' and you'll see the anchor points appear, which you can adjust using the same selection tool.

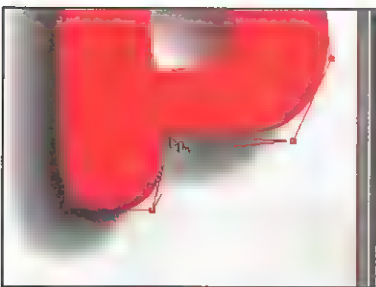


letters2.psd

This walkthrough continues from the previous page, but you can jump straight in at this point using the letters2.psd file which you'll find on your bonus CD.



The same method can be used with any circular mapped region, but be aware that adjusting the map will resize your perfect circle. Also bear in mind that moving one of the side anchors will keep the opposite side in the same position, while scaling the remaining three sides accordingly.



Adjusting image maps created using the Polygon Image Map tool also follow the same principals of dragging anchor points, although your actions are restricted to the currently selected anchor only. The remainder of the shape is not affected; only the moved anchor and the guidelines between its surrounding points.



Quick duplication

Another keyboard shortcut consistent with that of duplicating layers and image slices that can be used with Image Maps is the duplication of an existing map by holding down the [Alt] key (on a PC) or [Option] key (on a Mac).



You can remove anchors from polygon-shaped maps if you like. With either the Polygon Image Map tool or the Image Map Select tool, hold down the [Alt] key (on a PC) or [Option] key (on a Mac). Position your cursor near an anchor point you'll notice the cursor icon adapting to indicate the Delete option.

Client and Server-sided maps

What's the difference between these two methods and which one's best for you?



Inline or background?

Don't waste your time attempting to create image maps from images embedded into the background of your web page – this simply won't work. The only image a map can be associated with is an 'inline' image, that is, an image included within the body of your layout.

Throughout the web design world the terms 'client' and 'server' raise their heads from time to time, threatening to baffle mere mortals. However, in reality the concept isn't quite as daunting as it sounds. You should think of these terms in the same way as 'remote' and 'local', which describe whether site content is held on the user's computer or on the server of the site's host. The terms 'client' and 'server' refer to similar principles.

Image maps are defined by code that sets the coordinates for your

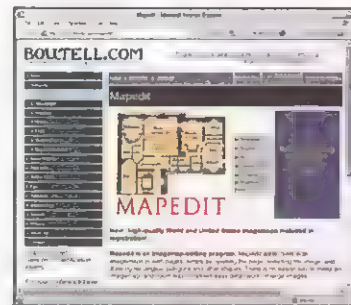
link regions. By default, ImageReady creates what is known as a 'client-sided' image map, which mean this code is embedded into the HTML of the page and it's left to the user's browser to recreate the effect.

'Server-sided' image maps are used less and less, as they tend to be much too tricky to configure and less reliable. However, ImageReady does still support the creation of server-sided maps by enabling you to configure some of the Output Settings. We'll look at these in more detail in Chapter 9.

KNOW YOUR CLIENTS

Do you know your NCSA from your CERN?

ImageReady may support client-sided image maps, but you'll still need a reasonable understanding of the way they work. Most web designers will never need to create such outdated maps, as the simpler client-sided variant has become far more popular. If you do need to create server-sided maps for whatever reason you could battle through with ImageReady or make use of dedicated software such as Mapedit, which provides a few more specialised features. Admittedly, ImageReady will cater for the vast majority of your image mapping needs but if you do need to take things to the extreme, this package will help.



Mapedit from boutell.com is a dedicated image map editing tool that will help you take things to extremes

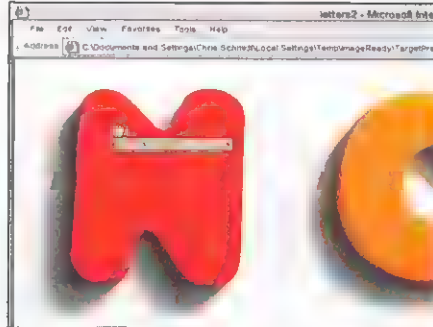
www.boutell.com/mapedit

Under the bonnet

ImageReady protects you from the code, but are those little pointy brackets really that scary?

The ImageReady environment will never force you to face your pages' underlying code, but a little knowledge of what's going on within the HTML will certainly help. For example, it'll come in handy if you need to tweak the code after the page has been exported.

Unlike sliced images, an image map is defined by the code. This means you can make changes at a later date directly within your web authoring software without having to recreate the entire layout as you might when working with slices.



When previewed in the browser the Alt text is clearly legible when the cursor is held over a mapped region

The code below was generated in our previous example. It might look scary, but you'll soon figure it out.



Avoiding the pointy brackets

A little understanding always helps, but you'll find WYSIWYG web authoring programs such as GoLive (see demo version on your CD) and Dreamweaver make working with image maps quite simple. If things get a little too scary to hand-code, you can always take advantage of these features.

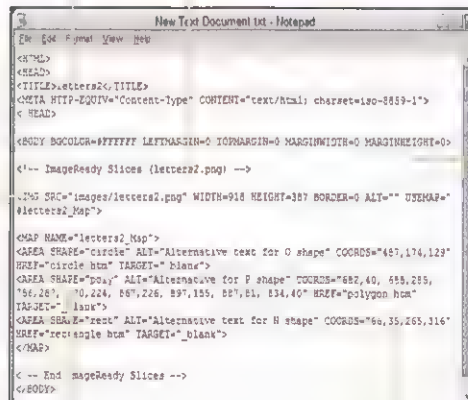
THE IMAGE MAP HTML

The opening code is common with most HTML pages. It includes the <head> which establishes the page, and the <body> which contains the actual content.

The image itself is embedded inline as a regular graphic, although you should note the USEMAP attribute which associates it to the following map.

The shapes themselves are easily distinguishable using the shape attribute, which will help you recognise which line of code refers to which object.

```

<!-- ImageReady Slices (letters2.jpg) -->

</img>

<!-- Map -->
<map name="letters2_Map">
  <area shape="circle" alt="Alternative text for O shape" coords="457,174,129" href="#" target="_blank">
  <area shape="poly" alt="Alternative text for P shape" coords="682,40, 655,285, 756,281, 70,224, 867,228, 897,155, 89,81, 834,40" href="#" target="_blank">
  <area shape="rect" alt="Alternative text for H shape" coords="66,35,265,316" href="#" target="_blank">
</map>
<!-- End ImageReady Slices -->

```

Lines of code like this one provide comments to help you understand where code segments start and finish.

In common with many HTML tags, the map itself is defined with an opening <map> and a closing </map> tag at the end.

The coordinates and remaining attributes within these <area> tags are used to further define the behaviour that you configured within ImageReady.

Targeting your links

What's the difference between a '_blank' target and a '_top' target?

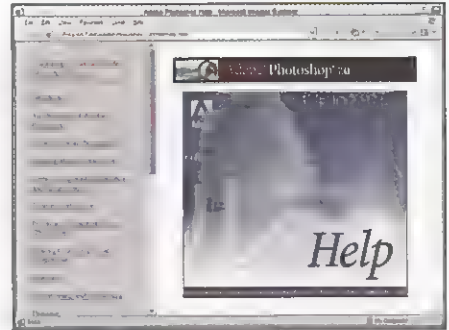


Named targets

The target identities that we've mentioned here are the most common, although you can type any string within the field to configure the attribute. Coders will make common use of the feature when a link should affect a specific window or frame, for example.

The target field is an attribute that we've already encountered several times, but it's one you'll need to drill into your subconscious.

A target is the part of a HTML link that determines the browser window in which your destination link will be opened. You don't actually need to enter anything at all for your target — a link will open automatically within the same browser window. On occasions, however, you may need to open a link in a new window or to override your page's frame settings.



The Photoshop Help files are actually presented using HTML frames, so if you want to check them out just head over to the Help menu

The targets below are offered by default when you define maps within ImageReady.



In the picture

Frames are a HTML concept that allows multiple pages to be open at the same time within the same browser window. They're most popular use is in the creation of page layouts that require a static navigation bar, while text is scrollable. These are more than likely created by frames, or rather the containing frameset, which defines the area each page is assigned and the actual page that will be displayed.

TELLING TARGETS

- **LEFT EMPTY**, the Target field will simply load the linked page within the same browser window as the current page.
 - **WITH THE _BLANK** option selected, any associated link will open in a newly-created browser window, leaving the original page alone.
 - **THE _SELF** option is more relevant to framed content, as any link with this attribute will refresh the current frame only, leaving remaining frames unaffected.
 - **THE _PARENT** attribute is another frame-specific option. When embedded into a link the new page will override the entire frameset, with the new page filling the browser window.
- SIMILARLY, THE _TOP** option replaces the current browser window with the links content offering similar results. This is often ignored as a target, due to it having a similar function to a default link.

Saving image map content

Once your image maps are ready, output your work so that it can be viewed online

When saving your image map, make use of the File > 'Save Optimised As' option. The File > Save options relate more specifically to the actual ImageReady file, although this too should be saved as a regular PSD in case of future edits.

We looked at the 'Save Optimised As' dialogue when outputting our previous Sliced layout, although we've provided a little more detail below about the available options.

If you're exporting an image map to be included within an existing HTML page, then look back at the

```
<BODY BGCOLOR=#FFFFFF LEFTMARGIN=0 TOPMARGIN=0 MARGINWIDTH=0 MARGINHEIGHT=0>
<!-- ImageReady Slices (letters2.png) -->
<IMG SRC="images/letters2.png" WIDTH=918 HEIGHT=387 BORDER=0 ALT="letters2_Map">
<MAP NAME="letters2_Map">
  <AREA SHAPE="circle" ALT="Alternative text for O shape" COORDS="6756,287, 770,224, 867,226, 897,155, 887,81, 834,40" HREF="circle.htm" TARGET="_blank">
  <AREA SHAPE="poly" ALT="Alternative text for P shape" COORDS="6756,287, 770,224, 867,226, 897,155, 887,81, 834,40" HREF="poly.htm" TARGET="_blank">
  <AREA SHAPE="rect" ALT="Alternative text for N shape" COORDS="6756,287, 770,224, 867,226, 897,155, 887,81, 834,40" HREF="rect.htm" TARGET="_blank">
</MAP>
<!-- End ImageReady Slices -->
</BODY>
```

If you need to transfer the output code, simply cut and paste between the comments of the exported code

code on page 72. Notice the comment tags, which will help you cut and paste the relevant code into the page.



Optimise your images

As with any work that you export from ImageReady, don't forget to run the regular optimisation configuration through your image. Image maps are contained within a single graphic, so you'll only need to configure the hosting image – don't think you need to optimise each of the mapped areas individually.

OPTIMISED OPTIONS

THE PRIMARY purpose of the dialogue box that appears should be familiar, offering you the opportunity of browsing through your system to specify a location and a file name for the exported work.

THE SAVE AS TYPE options allow you to determine whether your exported work should be saved as HTML and Images or the two elements saved individually. The combined output is the preferable option if you plan to create an entire page.

THE SETTINGS listed next determine how the exported work will be converted and saved. These can be configured through ImageReady's Output Settings, which we'll consider in more detail in Chapter 9.

THE FINAL SLICES option is greyed out when exporting image mapped content. The method doesn't support the slicing concept because a map can only be applied to an entire image.



Missing images

If you cut and paste the resulting code into another page you'll need to ensure that the exported file is saved into the same directory as the target page. Otherwise you'll have to manually adapt the code to reference the image that the map relies upon.

ANIMATING GRAPHICS IN IMAGEREADY

Delivering your work via the web is much better than traditional media in lots of ways. One of the most visually exciting of these is the support for animation

During these times of broadband connectivity we tend to take the capabilities of the internet for granted. Since the advent of Macromedia Flash, websites have been packed with animated features, whether as part of a stylish navigation, to contain a streaming movie or just as simple eye candy that brings to life an otherwise static site.

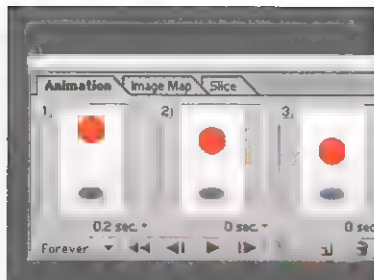
Flash is a dedicated application that's way beyond the scope of this Guide, but we can add animated elements with our Adobe titles just as easily. Photoshop itself won't provide any animation options, but ImageReady has more than enough

support for creating basic movement on our pages through a file format known as the animated .GIF.

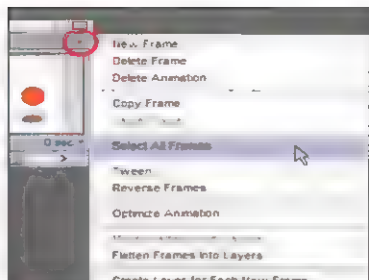
What are animated .GIFs?

The animated .GIF format was developed way ahead of Flash and was, for quite some time, the only method of including movement within a web page. The principle uses a number of .GIF images that display in quick sequence.

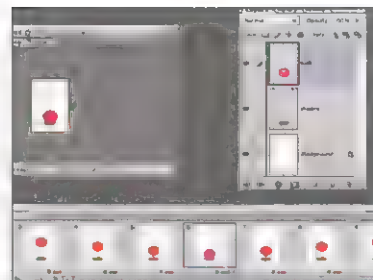
Obviously, packing complex imagery into the .GIF format would result in a dramatic increase the file size, so you'll need to keep things small in terms of image dimensions and animation time. There are plenty



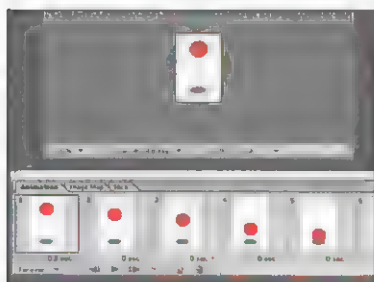
Page 82 Meet the Animation palette and understand ImageReady's options



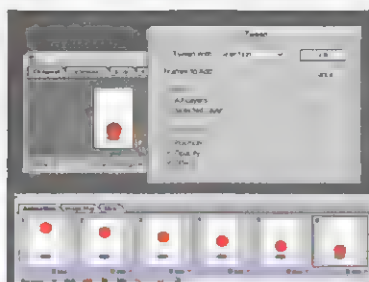
Page 83 Improve your workflow with additional options via the palette menu



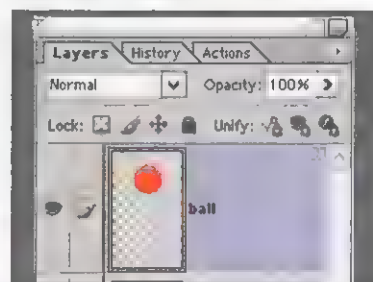
Page 85 Create the beginnings of an animated bouncing ball. Here's how...



Page 86 Make the ball animation more realistic with a more natural motion



Page 87 Turn here to discover what on earth 'tweening' really means



Page 88 The Unify options in the Layer palette provide options for new content

of examples of animated .GIF files to be found online. They're dotted around numerous sites, although a quick search in Google will bring up sites dedicated to the format, which should give you some idea of the limitations involved when creating your own versions.

Despite issues with file size there is one distinct advantage that the format has over alternative methods of animation such as Flash and Java. This is that an animated .GIF file is as easy to embed into any web page as a regular graphic, making use of the standard tag, as opposed to more complex embedded methods that the alternatives may rely on.

Creating animated .GIFs

Thankfully, the creation of animated .GIF content is relatively straightforward within ImageReady, although it will still appear Greek until you've had some introduction to the basic principles involved and methods that the software uses.

The following chapter should put aside any concerns that you may have over the creation of animated .GIF files. However, do keep in mind that more subtle animated features are often far more stylish and successful. So, you might want to think twice before creating that banner of garish flashing lights across your pages...

The Animation palette

This palette makes more sense with some content in place, so here's one we made earlier



Keep it light

More frames may mean your animation plays back smoother, but it will also increase the file size of your final image. Try to keep things lean but don't be too fussy about super-smooth movement.

If you're attempting to make sense of the Animation palette without an animated .GIF in place it can be confusing. With this in mind we've created an animation below of a bouncing ball, which should help you grasp the concept of using individual frames to simulate movement.

Many of the controls are tucked away toward the bottom of the palette. Here you'll find a number of familiar options such as the shortcut icons and those that create and remove frames. However, there's more going on here than meets the



There are plenty of examples of animated GIFs to see on the web. Just do a search through Google and you'll get an idea of what is possible

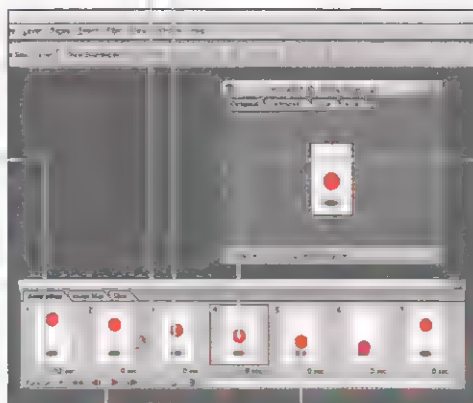
eye — for example, you can determine the amount of time that each frame remains visible.

THE PALETTE EXPLAINED

The 'tweens' shortcut is a huge time-saver and helps to create more consistent movement by automatically adjusting content between a beginning and end frame.

The first option on the left of the palette controls the loop of the animation. This can be set to once, forever or to your own preferred specification.

The playback controls look like standard tape deck controls. These include options to jump to first frame, move forward or backward one frame and play options.



The remaining controls should also be familiar as standard Photoshop icons, offering options for duplicating or deleting the current frame.

An animation is made of individual frames that are presented in a linear style across the animation palette — the frame furthest to the left is naturally played first.

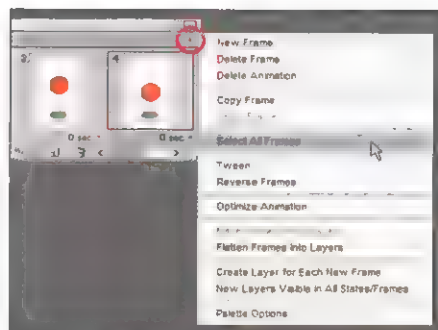
Below each of the frames is a drop-down time value. You can vary this value in individual frames to pause playback for a moment or two in time.

The Animation palette menu

More time-saving features are lurking under the Animation palette's contextual menu

Many of the most important controls are available via the Animation palette itself, but you certainly shouldn't ignore the palette menu. This contains more features that will improve your workflow and help you create smoother animations than you could ever make by hand.

Many of the options are self-evident by their titles and descriptions, although we've listed a few below that are of particular interest. Arguably the most important of these must be the Palette Options, as it is from here



As with all the palettes in both Photoshop and ImageReady, additional contextual options are available through the palette's contextual menu

that you can adjust the size of the preview thumbnails for a better idea of how your frames will appear.



Animated photos

Photographic content is normally best optimised in the .JPG format, but you'll need to convert this to .GIF if you want any movement within such a file. This can lead to loss in quality if you're not careful with the optimisation process.



Back to front

With more experimental animations, running the frames backwards can sometimes produce some interesting results. The option for this is found under the palette menu – give it a try and if you don't like the results, simply undo the action to return to the original.

KEY ADVANTAGES IN THE PALETTE MENU

THE TWEEN and Reverse options are particularly effective for the quick emulation of movement that returns to an original point. Making use of these options will help to create a perfect loop with certain animations.

ALTHOUGH you can still optimise the graphic content through the usual channels, the Optimize Animation feature will trim away any excess pixels around your final image file, further trimming the file size.

AN ANIMATION is composed of a single layer that's adjusted usually by moving its position. Flattening frames into layers will convert these movements into individual layers should you want access to these positions independently.

SIMILARLY, the penultimate options provide the ability to create new layers when new frames are created, or to make sure any additional content is automatically applied to existing frames.

The Frame concept

If the idea behind frames is something of a mystery, we'll put you in the picture



Flash frames

Macromedia Flash uses the same frames principle although the vector application enjoys the luxury of a timeline to control playback and timing. In light of this the application actually uses key frames, which determine the moment an event should occur while movement occurs between them hence the phrase 'tweening'.

The idea behind the frame-based approach to animation used by ImageReady is a simple one that can be directly compared with film. A movie reel is made up of sequential images played in rapid succession, and an animated .GIF is no different. But unlike film, with .GIFs we can specify how long each cell is played for, creating pauses in playback if we like. This is an important aspect of the concept – otherwise we'd need to bloat the final file further with multiple images to create such an effect.

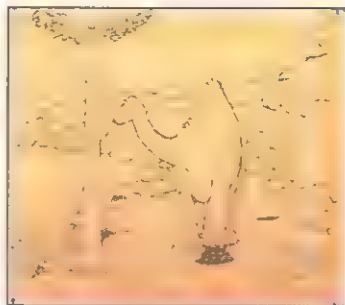
Creating a smooth and realistic animation can take a little practice, but with a little trial and error you'll soon get the hang of things. Just remember that any frames you delete are merely deleting the amended versions and not the original – in fact it's impossible to delete your artwork from the Animation palette alone.

Remember also that if you want your animation to cycle, then you will need to create content that returns to the same position as the first frame to do so seamlessly.

PERSISTENCE OF VISION

How the eye is fooled into seeing movement

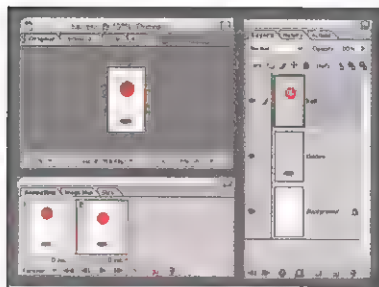
Animation is based on the 'persistence of vision' theory, which dates back over 2,000 years. But it was only fully addressed in the early 19th Century by Mark Roget, who determined that the human eye is capable of carrying an after-image onto the image that follows. Subsequent experiments with early mechanical contraptions such as the Zoetrope and Kinematoscope were based around his findings and lead directly to the early animations of the 20th Century. Since then, animation has evolved into an art form in its own right but the central principal remains the same: a sequence of images fools the eye into seeing motion.



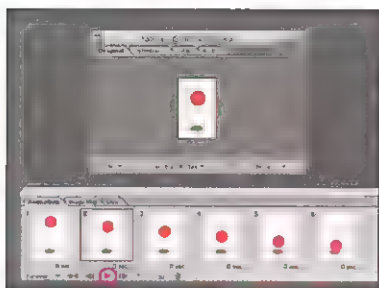
In 1914 *Gertie the Dinosaur*, by Winsor McCay was one of the first animations to grab the public's imagination

Creating your first animation

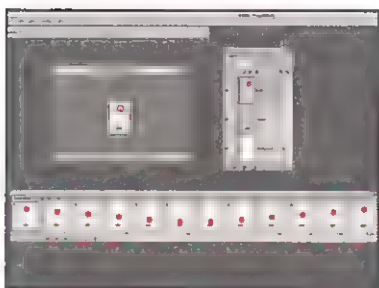
Now you know how ImageReady simulates movement, let's make that ball bounce!



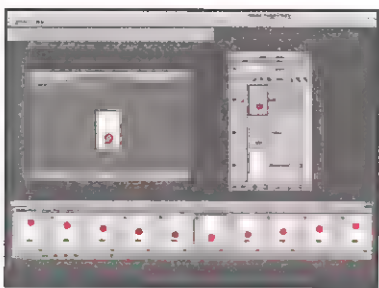
1 Open ball1.psd (on your CD) in ImageReady and access the Animation palette. The palette contains a single frame mirroring the initial image. Duplicate the frame using the shortcut icon at the foot of the palette and activate the ball layer. Click on the new frame within the Animation palette and, holding down [Shift], hit the down arrow. The new frame adapts while the first stays put.



2 Repeat the process four times, making duplicates only after the ball's position has been moved. You'll find the ball should have reached the bottom to meet its shadow. Test the animation by hitting the Play button located at the foot of the palette and you'll see that the animation jerks when it restarts. We'll need to consider returning the ball to its original position to solve this problem.



3 Click the first frame and hold the [Shift] key before clicking the last frame to select all the current frames. Choose the Copy Frames option from the palette menu and then the Paste Frames option choosing the Paste After Selection option before hitting OK. Leave the pasted frames selected and turn again to the palette options and choose the Reverse Frames option to invert the motion.



4 The duplication has completed the effect, although if you look at the frame sequence you'll notice that frame 7 duplicates the previous frame, which is only bloating the file size. Similarly, the first and last frames are the same, so we can safely delete one of these too and shave off some precious kilobytes of our final file before playing back the movie once more for a much smoother movement.



ball1.psd

Use the ball1.psd file from the CD to carry out this walkthrough. You'll notice the image is made up of two additional layers to the plain background – one for the ball itself and the other for a shadow, providing some gravitational indication.

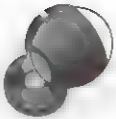


Alternative animation

Animation isn't limited simply to movement; you can apply layer styles or varying degrees of opacity to a layer during its frame transitions to create some impressive glowing effects, for example.

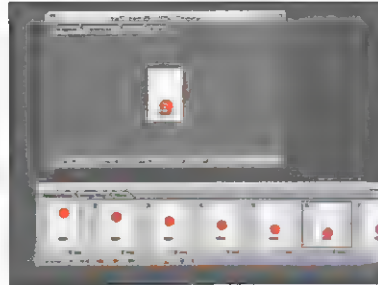
More imaginative animation

Our last walkthrough made the ball move; now let's use some more advanced techniques

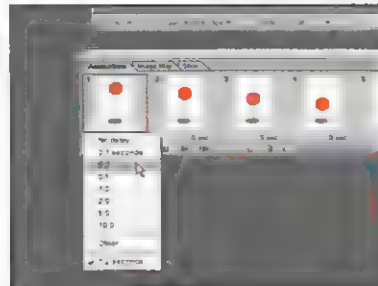


ball2.psd

You can use the same file that you created on the previous page for this tutorial, or you can dig out the ball2.psd file from the CD if you want to jump straight in at this point.



Play back the resulting file from the last walkthrough – although the animation is nice and smooth you'll quickly notice lack of realism in the movement. The ball actually appears to bounce perpetually between an unseen ceiling and the floor. To get around this we'll need to consider how a real ball might actually bounce and attempt to replicate its movement.



To lose the feeling of a bounce at the top of the curve we could pause the playback slightly when the ball reaches that point. Select the first frame, which contains the ball at its highest point, and select the 0.2 seconds option from the list that becomes available when you click on the time value beneath the frame.

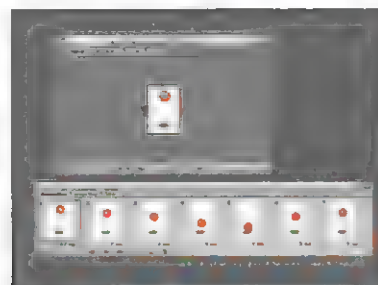


Motion curves

The Animation palette actually offers another angle on creating such a smooth trajectory. If you imagine the ball thumbnails act as key points on a hypothetical line you can adjust their position by eye by recreating a smooth curve from such points.



Play the file again – at first glance the effect seems worse than it was originally, but this is due to the lack of speed when the ball returns from its bounce. A physical ball bouncing will invariably travel upwards with more momentum, which we can emulate by removing some of the frames on its upwards journey. Remove frames 7 and 8 and play back the movie to get the idea.



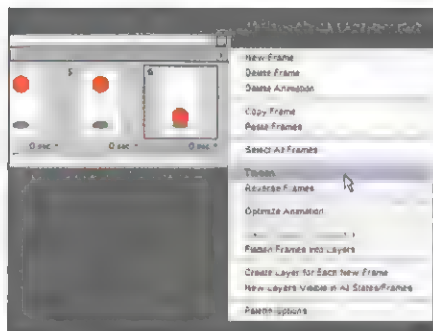
To further add to the effect you could try removing the frame prior to the ball being at its lowest point (frame 5) and graduating the position of the third and fourth frames to smooth the motion as the ball descends. Such movement is impossible to illustrate within these pages, but open up the ball3.psd from your bonus CD to see the final effect in action.

Save time with tweening

Why do things manually? ImageReady will 'tween' things for you automatically!

The method is intended to fill in a smooth movement between two points. Macromedia Flash makes great use of 'tweening', enabling you to define two points and leave the software to figure out the rest, depending on time values.

ImageReady provides a similar function, although you'll need to specify the number of frames over which the effect should take place. Taking our bouncing ball example, we could have simply duplicated the original frame before positioning it into the last frame, then selecting



The Tween feature is available as an option via the Animation palette menu, as well as via the icon within the palette's shortcuts

all the required frames and choosing the Tween option to complete the effect quickly and effectively.



Direction of motion

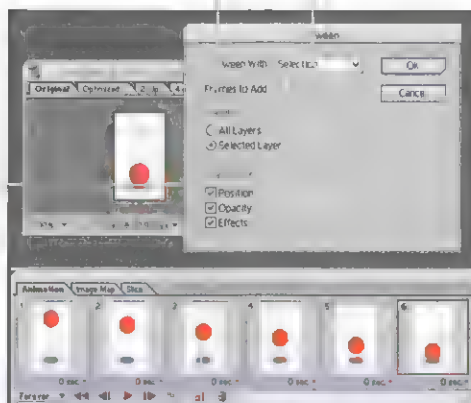
The tween method is undoubtedly a quick way of creating smooth motion, but remember it can only calculate the required distance of movement between frames within a straight line of the two end points. For more complex motion you'll have to do things by hand.

UNDERSTANDING THE TWEEN OPTIONS

You can also decide whether to restrict any adjustment to all layers or just the selected layer to ensure you don't alter static content.

And don't forget you can also tween attributes other than just the position – the opacity and layer styles can also be amended.

To perform the Tween function, the most obvious point of entry is to make use of the shortcut at the foot of the Animation palette.



A dialogue box is then presented, enabling you to determine how the tween will be calculated, depending on your initial selection.

To get started you'll need to create the required number of frames and adjust the position, opacity and/or effects of the last frame.

Once you've approved your settings the frames between your first and last frame should revise themselves to create a smooth motion.

Unifying layers

Although not unique to animations, the Layer Unify options in ImageReady save headaches

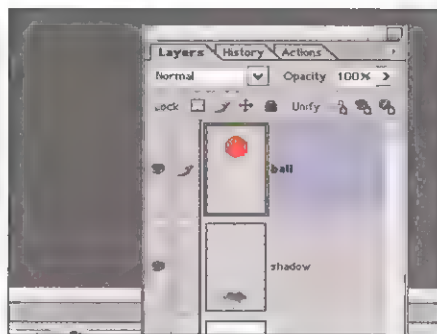


Matching content

The Layer > Match command is a related function to the Unify controls, which lets you apply the layer attributes for an existing state or frame to others in the rollover or animation.

As you continue to experiment with animations in ImageReady and get your head around the concept of time adding another dimension to your work, you'll be grateful to the Unify options, found in the Layer palette.

You'll soon find plenty of use for these controls – not just with animations, but also rollover buttons and any other elements you create that rely on time or numerous states. Using the various Unify controls you can introduce new content to these elements easily and with greater



The Unify options are a subtle addition to the ImageReady Layer palette, located just to the right of the various lock icons

control. We've outlined the Unify options below with some description that should introduce their functions.



Saving animations

When it's time to save your animation make sure you choose the .GIF format, otherwise the exported file will remain static and all the hard work you've put into animating the content will be in vain

UNDERSTAND THE UNIFY OPTIONS

PHOTOSHOP users will be initially baffled by the Unify controls, which are unique to the Layer palette of ImageReady, and are located below the Opacity slider at the head of the palette.

THE UNIFY LAYER POSITION button is found to the left of the three options and applies any changes you make to a layer's position to all states in a rollover and all frames in an animation.

THE UNIFY LAYER VISIBILITY button is contained next to this and has a similar function, except it controls the opacity of a selected item over the current frames.

THE UNIFY LAYER STYLE button is the third option with the same principle but applies any layer styles you've created across the remaining frames, which can save some considerable time when recreating such an effect.

Know your animation limits

You can alter the position, opacity and layer styles of your frames, but there are limitations...



Open the ball3.psd file and play the animation. You'll probably agree that the animation is looking much more realistic than when we first started. However, there is one more detail that would give it a final touch and that is by adding some dynamics to the static shadow. If we assume the light is coming from the top of the ball, then the shadow would get larger the higher the ball.

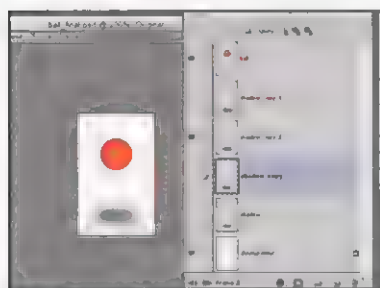


balls3.psd

This file carries on from where our last walkthrough on page 86 left off, so feel free to use your own version if you prefer.



Let's assume that the current shadow is about the right size for the ball being at its lowest position. We must therefore adjust the size incrementally over the remaining frames but if you do this by simply scaling the existing shadow with another frame selected you'll soon discover that this affects all the frames – there is no way of actually doing this without considering another approach.

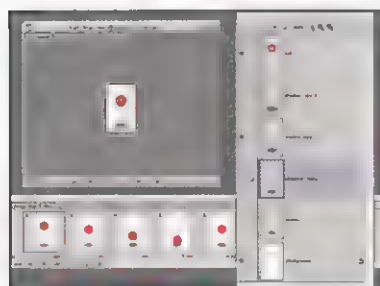


This is because we cannot animate the dimensions of a layer without actually changing the base layer content. So instead what must be done is to create duplicate layers of the shadow and make changes to those instead. Select an alternative frame and make your changes to a duplicate, and then display the appropriate sized shadow to reflect the ball's position.



Added realism

Why not adjust the opacity of the shadows to add to the effect? Check out ball_final.psd on the CD to see the completed animation with the adjustments made to the shadow in terms of both size and opacity.



You'll find you can reuse the duplicate shadow layers for frame 2 to frame 7 and frame 3 to frame 6, because they both contain the ball at the same height. Do this simply by hiding or revealing the required layer through the Layer palette within a given frame. Have a look at the ball_final.psd file on the CD to see how our version came out.

Chapter 9

OUTPUT SETTINGS IN IMAGEREADY

For more advanced control over the output of your work, turn to ImageReady's Output Settings. These provide yet more powerful controls over the way your work is rendered

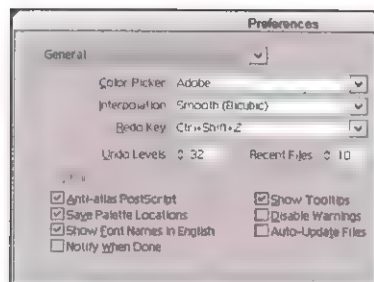
Configuring the preferences to any application is a process that can really make some dramatic changes to the way you work. The default settings of any software title are generally configured to suit a broad spectrum of users, but it's only when you get under the hood of the application that you can decide exactly how you want it to perform.

Photoshop and ImageReady share similar options for the primary Preference settings, which you'll find under the Edit menu of both applications. There are a couple of differences between the two, which we'll consider later, as we look more specifically at the Output Settings.

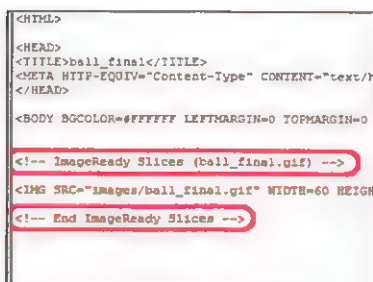
Tricks of the trade

In contrast to the main application preferences, the Output Settings provide more relevant controls over the way your work is exported. You can access these controls via the File > Output Settings menu, although they only become available once a file is actually open.

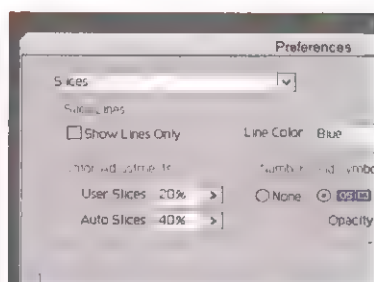
It's only when you dig into these options that you appreciate the full web design potential of ImageReady. For example, most professional designers make use of Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) to control page formatting and even layout whereas, by default, ImageReady creates output using more traditional



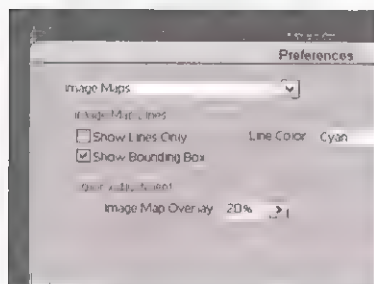
Page 92 The differences between the Output Settings and Preferences



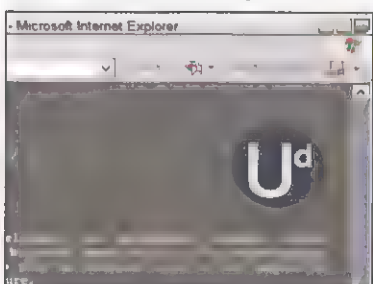
Page 93 The HTML settings allow you to determine the formatting of the code



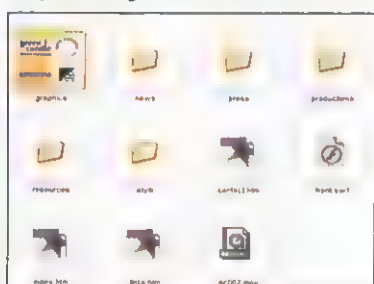
Page 94 Set up your slices using both Output Settings and the main Preferences



Page 95 Change the look of Image Maps via ImageReady's Preferences dialogue



Page 96 How HTML backgrounds can help you stretch your designs



Page 97 Create an organised site with clear file-naming conventions

techniques such as embedding attributes into surrounding tags and tables to recreate page structure.

This isn't to say that ImageReady is using outdated methods, but rather that it's erring towards more established techniques. However, professional designers have a better idea of developing technologies and are quite capable of adapting the software to integrate ImageReady's output with a specific project.

Thinking ahead

The good news is that this kind of modification is not the sole preserve of web design professionals. A basic understanding of how your

ImageReady Output Settings work can greatly improve your workflow. Not only will it help you when within ImageReady, it'll also make the process of modifying your web pages at the next stage easier, with software such as Adobe GoLive or Macromedia Dreamweaver.

Essentially, Photoshop and ImageReady are just tools to create an initial page, graphic or page element that you will continue to use within a dedicated web building environment. So with a little consideration of your Output Settings you'll be making sure your workflow is much more effective in the long term.

Output Settings vs Preferences

These two options provide similar features, but you'll need to be aware of their strengths



Quick access

To jump into the ImageReady's Output Settings via a keyboard shortcut use [Control]+[Alt]+[H] keys (for PC users) or [Option]+[Command]+[H] keys (on the Mac). Similarly you can access either Photoshop or ImageReady's Preferences quickly by using the [Control]+[K] (on a PC) or [Command]+[K] (on a Mac).

Unlike the general Preferences dialogue, the Output Settings within ImageReady relate just to a particular file, which is why they are unavailable unless a file is currently open. But with a file available you'll find access to the various settings under the File > Output Settings submenu. Regardless of which method you choose you'll always have access to the parallel options via a drop-down list, which bears some similarity to the way the Preference dialogue also offers access to related options.

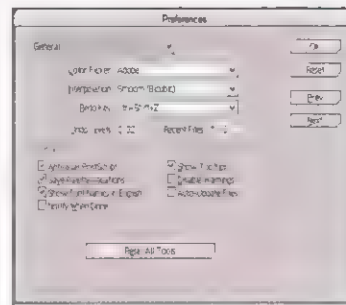
The primary purpose of the feature is to set up the properties that your exported HTML and graphics will adopt. This can be as casual as whether your HTML tags are created using upper- or lower-case letters, or as crucial as determining whether your sliced layout is recreated using HTML tables or CSS methods.

ImageReady will automatically revert to default settings for new projects, but it's worth remembering that you can load and save settings, which can take some of the tedium out of the task over related projects.

...AND PREFERENCES?

How do the Preferences enhance your working environment?

Whereas the Output Settings cover options for a specific file, the main application Preferences dialogue enables you to determine how Photoshop or ImageReady actually perform. You can find either application's Preferences at the foot of the Edit menu, although if you're using OS X you'll find it contained within the main Application menu. There are many similarities between the settings in each program, but there are inevitable differences too – we'll mention a few of these in context of the Output Settings over the next few pages, so you can get the most out of both the software and the work it exports.



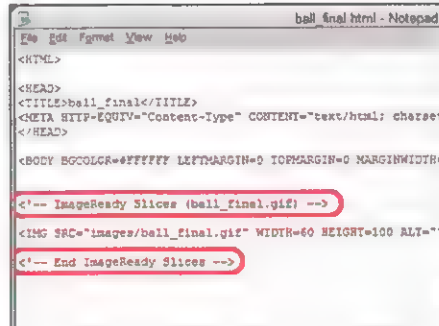
The ImageReady Preferences are similar to that of Photoshop, although there are some specific differences

HTML Output Settings

It may not be a visual element, but the way the code is configured can be equally important

The first options found within the Output Settings are those that define the HTML code that underlies any web page. Some of the Formatting options are a simple case of preference, with no direct influence over the final appearance of the page. But the Coding options offer some more specific settings that can be crucial, depending what you're planning to do with your work next.

We've pointed out a few key features below that should help you understand the implications behind



Including HTML comments around your created element will be useful if the thought of editing raw HTML fills you with dread

some of the more specific configurations. If in doubt, leave things at their default settings.



GoLive compatibility

If you choose to reformat the code to be more compatible with GoLive 5 or earlier, then be aware that the concept of the 'Selected' rollover state is not supported. You'll either need to revise any of these elements, or upgrade your web authoring software to a more recent GoLive version (see bonus CD for a demo).

TWEAK YOUR CODE

You can access the various modes offered by the Output Settings via the drop-down list at the head of the dialogue box.

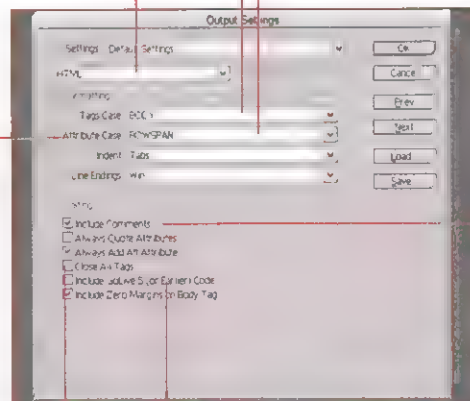
Similarly, choosing an Indent method won't alter the page layout, although indenting lines of code makes reading the source code much easier.

'Close All Tags' can be an essential option to check if your final pages are to be powered through XML or CSS, which may require such strict rules.

Altering the case of the tags and their attributes has no direct affect on the end page and is a personal preference for hand-coders.

With the Include Comments option checked your code will be easier to cut and paste into another page. As such an entry will mark start and end points.

Checking the 'Include GoLive 5' option will reformat the code to be compatible with earlier versions of Adobe's leading web authoring software.



Configuring your slices

HTML or CSS for recreating your sliced layout? It's a big decision, but don't get cut up about it

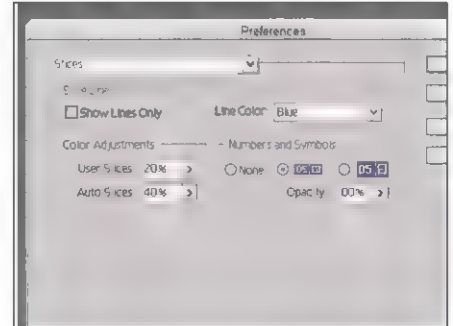


Visualising slices

The ImageReady Preferences dialogue has its own entry for slices, which enables you to determine how your slices should be indicated as you work. For example, you could decide to change the line colour from its default blue to make working with similar-coloured layouts a much clearer task.

The Slices options may not have much influence over your pages' appearance, but with a little configuration you can make the assets more recognisable when it comes to editing your pages within your web authoring software.

One aspect that can cause problems is whether to recreate your layout using HTML tables or Cascading Style Sheets. The former is more established, although many will argue that CSS is the way forward and more efficient coding is possible this way.



The ImageReady Preferences enable you to change the appearance of your slices when developing your layouts

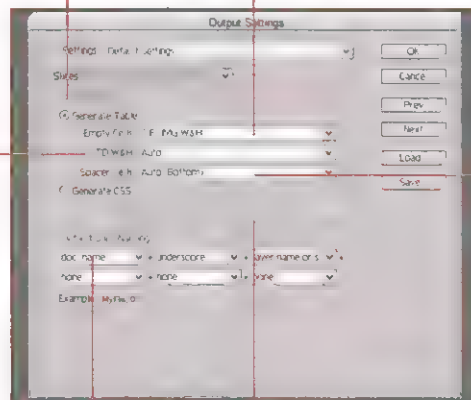
If in doubt, use HTML tables, because you'll need a fair bit of experience to fix any CSS problems.

KEY SLICE SETTINGS

The main decision to make when dealing with slices is the format in which your layout will be recreated – HTML or CSS.

TD is HTML for a table cell (Table Data) and the field here allows you to define whether dimensions are included in such a feature.

Creating a naming convention that you recognise will help you identify individual sliced graphics through the web authoring software.



In this field you can decide whether empty cells will be populated with a created GIF or the non-standard No Wrap attribute.

Adding spacer cells is necessary with table layouts in which slice boundaries do not align. This prevents the table from breaking apart in some browsers.

The Referenced field is active when the CSS method is selected, and specifies how slice positions are created in the HTML file.

Image Map settings

Image maps are quite simple. Output Settings and Preferences help you find your way around

There aren't really too many options within the Output Settings for image maps. This is due mainly to the fact that the method is primarily HTML driven, and so all the necessary configurations you may need are contained within that particular category.

The only real decision you'll have to make is whether to use a client- or server-sided image map. ImageReady will default to the client-sided variety, which is the preferred option for virtually anyone creating an image map. But should

you need to create the outdated server-sided version, controls are available here to make use of either the NCSA or CERN standards or a combination of both client- and server-sided maps.

The placement option at the foot of the dialogue interface determines the position the actual code that powers the map within the HTML page. As HTML loads in a top-down manner it's best to leave the default option of Bottom selected so that this element doesn't interfere with the loading of the rest of your page.



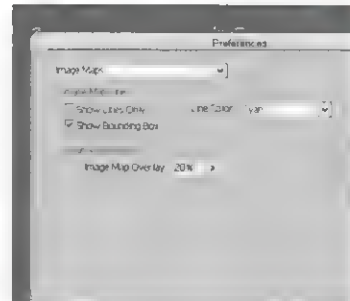
Clearer vision

Checking the 'Show Lines Only' and removing the 'Show Bounding Box' option within the Image Map options will keep visual indications around your mapped regions to a minimum. This may be preferable if you want a clearer idea of how your layout is progressing.

IMAGE MAP PREFERENCES

Change the way image maps are shown through your designs

You can find display options for your image maps within the ImageReady Preferences. Changes here will only affect the way you see your image maps during development, but this can make working with image maps much clearer. When a region is mapped ImageReady helps you identify the area by automatically laying a colour over the top, but this can be a problem if it's a similar colour to that of your original image. You can always head over to the View > Show submenu and turn off the Image Map function, but this will make them invisible – instead a quick visit to the Preferences will allow you to choose 'Show Lines Only' to resolve the problem.



Make changes to the overlay option if you want to keep a clearer idea of how your imagery will appear

Background settings

Images used as a background and images integrated into the design are very distinct



Matte

The background option of 'Matte' can be understood as the primary background colour that your page defines. The method is particularly effective when creating .GIFs with transparency that should be set against a patterned background. With the background matte set to the dominant background colour, transparent elements will blend more effectively against the complex background, for example.

There is an important distinction to be made between imagery that forms part of a page's background and that which is embedded into the actual design. We'll look at the technicalities below, but there will be occasions when your sliced images don't necessarily need to include such a feature directly, as it will prove to be inefficient and slow down your page's delivery.

As far as the Output Settings are concerned, you have the option to decide whether to view the file as an

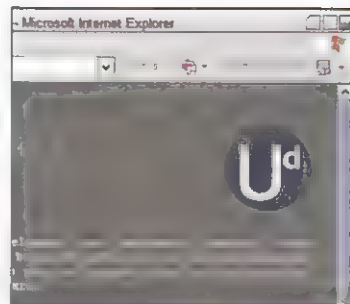
image or a background. With the former selected you can specify an alternative file that will be embedded into the background of the actual HTML page, keeping the foreground imagery separate. Therefore, the alternate background option will treat the entire design as a flattened whole when it comes to exporting your optimised version.

You do have the additional option of defining a background colour via the BG Color drop-down, but you may find that a regular design will already specify this.

THE HIERARCHY OF THE WEBPAGE

HTML has more depth than you might think

It's all too easy to think of a web page as a two-dimensional object, but there are actually a number of levels you can use to your advantage. The base level of the page is always the background, which can contain either a HTML-defined colour or a tiled image. Above this is placed the content, but this too has a few additional layers. Most web pages are constructed from tables that form the basic page layout. These tables are made up of a number of cells that can also contain their own unique background content. This is rendered above the primary background, but you can just as readily place any type of content text above this.



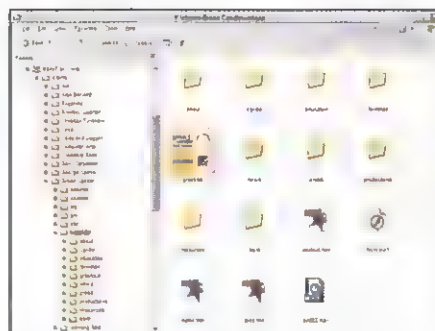
The logo is embedded as a GIF with transparency, taking advantage of the different page levels

Saving Files

Make your exported files easier to identify by making changes to file naming methods

Giving your filenames some kind of recognisable identity is crucial when you're developing web pages. Not only will this make the URL, or web address, more logical but it will also help you identify specific content from the mountain of text and image files that quickly mount up.

To keep things organised you should consider creating folders for various sections of your site. This will make it easier to locate files later, when using your web building software. You can set up a default



Creating subdirectories within your site will help you locate content easily, without having to wade through reams of flattened files

naming convention for your exported pages via the Output Settings, along with other options mentioned below.



8.3 naming convention

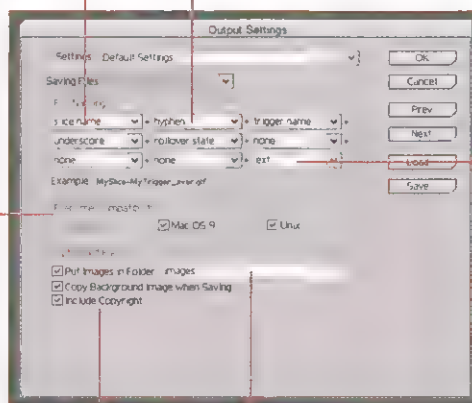
It used to be the case that all file names should have an eight-character description followed by a three-character extension such as 'filename.doc'. Although this is no longer essential, it's still good practice to avoid certain tricky characters.

FILE NAMING SETTINGS

Setting your default file naming convention is achieved through a series of drop-down boxes. These determine the syntax of your created files.

Keep all the options checked within the Filename Compatibility area for obvious reasons, otherwise those Unix geeks will never see your pages.

The remaining options are self-explanatory, although you'll have to enter the copyright info into the File > File Info field first.



You can make use of easily recognisable separators such as hyphens or underscores to keep text strings identifiable.

You can break the file name into numerous sections depending on your preference, but don't forget to end things with the extension option.

Placing reliant images in their own folder is a good habit to get into – you can change the default folder here if you prefer.

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR GREAT WEB IMAGERY

We've covered the main Photoshop and ImageReady features for creating web content, now let's turn to some common and not-so-common tricks of the trade...

If you've come this far you should have a good idea of the range of features that Photoshop and its web content 'cousin' ImageReady provide. But it's only when you put this theory into practice that you can fully appreciate the entire process of creating web content – and that's what we'll be doing in this chapter.

You've already learn that the software can create some of the most effective web design components, but you'll need a better idea of the bigger picture before we progress to the final chapter. That's where we'll put everything into context and create a homepage and content page for a fully functional site.

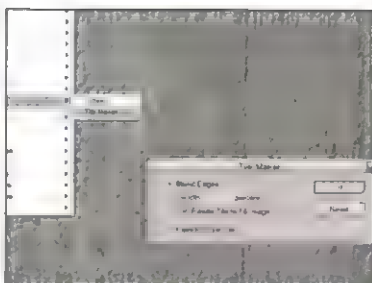
Thinking ahead

Of course, you must remember that Photoshop and ImageReady are merely tools that create your initial graphical content. Although it's possible to configure that content in a way that can be used within the context of a final site, you will need to have access and a little knowledge of web authoring if you plan to take your content further. After all, a collection of individual pages or graphic elements is no good to anyone; what you want to produce is a fully cohesive online presence.

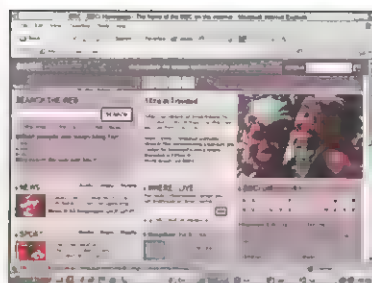
Photoshop and ImageReady have natural links to the Adobe web authoring package, GoLive (see trial



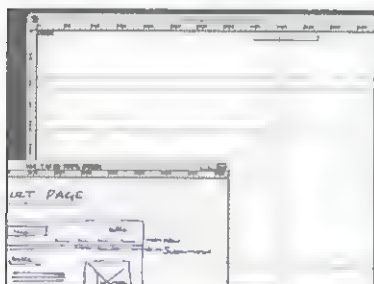
Page 100 Matching .GIF and .JPG images is possible with a little imagination



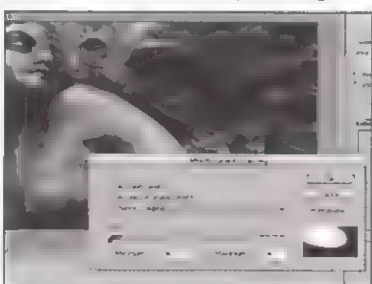
Page 101 Master ImageReady's Tile Maker filter and seamlessly tile images



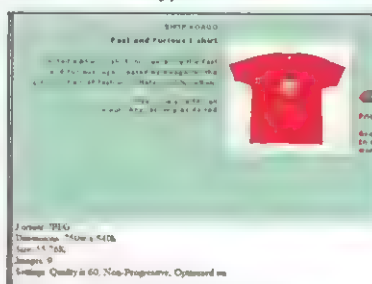
Page 102 How large should your page be to fit into the typical browser window?



Page 104 Use guides to establish your canvas for more consistent layouts



Page 106 Reference masks from Save for Web to dramatically reduce file size



Page 107 Testing your pages is an essential element of web design

version on your CD), but your finished web graphics can just as easily be transferred to Dreamweaver or any other web authoring application; you'll find that the techniques used are fairly universal. However, if you're new to the world of web authoring, then you should at least have a headstart with GoLive, because the interface has a lot in common with Photoshop's now-familiar workspace.

Back to reality

But before we get ahead of ourselves, let's continue with this chapter, where we'll point out a few tricks and tips that should help you

create some of the more common elements used in web design.

We're not just looking at practical considerations – we'll also point out a few theoretical points that will help you design better pages that will be more consistent when viewed across the various browsers and on different computer platforms.

Having an awareness of typical browser sizes and screen resolutions will help you create content that avoids the cardinal sin of web design – sideways scrolling – and will also be as useful to you as some of the more practical techniques, such as selective optimisation of graphics within the Save for Web feature.

Merging .GIF and .JPG imagery

What do you do if you can't decide which format is best? Use both, that's what...



Retaining dimensions

If you use this method you'll find the JPG is incapable of defining the table dimensions as a background element. To get around this simply size the foreground .GIF to that required using transparency around the excess regions to force the table cell to size.

Early in our introduction to web concepts back in Chapter 1 we stressed the importance of saving imagery in either the .GIF or .JPG formats, balancing quality with file size. However, this fails to take into consideration graphics that would benefit from both methods.

Take, for example, a flat colour logo that is to be offset against a textured background. In this case the logo would be best suited to the .GIF format, with its background as a .JPG. If we were to save such a file as a .GIF it would result in excessive

file size, while a .JPG of the entire image would suffer from noise artefacts around the sharpened edges of the logo.

But with a little imagination and some understanding of the way web pages are constructed, we can easily get around this by saving the two elements individually. We could save the background as a .JPG and embed this into the background of a table cell; while the foreground logo could be saved as a .GIF that supports transparency, allowing the background detail to show through.

MATTING

How to blend foreground and background images

The method we've suggested above will work better if you save the foreground .GIF image with anti-aliasing matching the background colour. This can be done within the Save for Web feature by first checking the Transparency option and then choosing the dominant background colour from the Matting option. This will then create a border of pixels around the foreground .GIF logo, which will blend your object smoothly into the background. Without this anti-aliasing you run the risk that your logo will appear blocky and pixelated. However, with the matting in place the two elements fuse together seamlessly to provide the best of both worlds.



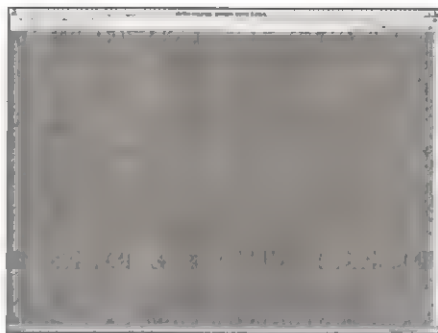
Zooming into this logo shows the anti-aliasing clearly and the colour chosen from the Matte option

Creating background tiles

Use ImageReady's unique Tile Maker filter to create seamless backgrounds from an image

When you embed a background texture into an HTML page it will automatically tile itself, depending on the size and resolution of the viewer's browser. This often results in irregularities where the tile recurs and causes an unwanted distraction from the page.

Fortunately, ImageReady has a filter found under the Filter > Other submenu, known as the Tile Maker, that's intended to tackle this problem. Unique to ImageReady, this filter is easy to use; just be careful that your image is sympathetic to the filter's



When the image has been converted via the Tile Maker and embedded into a web page background, the joins should be invisible

approach. With the right imagery it can be incredibly effective, as you can see in the example here.



Efficient backgrounds

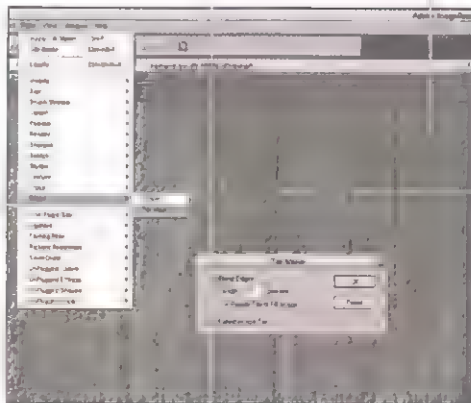
A background needn't be created from such a large image, as we've suggested here. You could create a background tile from an image that is only 1 pixel in height or width. A good example of this would be if you were to embed a gradient effect in a background. Applying a gradient and creating a background tile that's 800 pixels wide by 1 pixel tall will create a tiled horizontal gradient across your page.

THE TILE MAKER FILTER

The default option for the filter is to blend the edges of the image. You can determine in terms of percentage how much of the image should be affected.

The Tile Maker filter is one of just a few filters that is unique to ImageReady. This is due to the web-specific nature of the tool.

Choosing the Kaleidoscope option will transform the image into a more abstract but effective tile.



With our current settings, the outside 10% of the image has been redrawn based on the original content to smooth the join.

The central part of the image remains faithful to the original, although because we've checked the Resize option this has been scaled down somewhat.

With the Resize option checked your image will be scaled within the edge border you've defined to create a smoother transition.

Establishing page sizes

Avoid the cardinal sin of forcing your users to scroll sideways when viewing your web pages

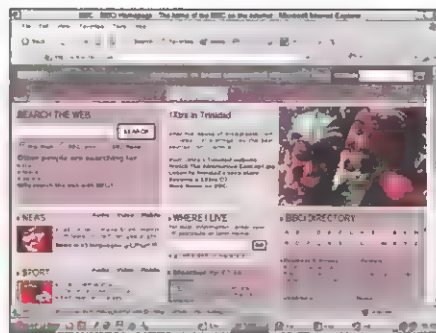


In the picture

Although vertical scrolling isn't as problematic as horizontal its still worth making sure more essential content, or at least a summary, is visible at the head of the page. This way visitors to your page will have a good idea of what they can expect when they browse through the page.

Unlike working with print, where you have a defined boundary to a page, a web browser size is determined by a combination of the viewer's monitor size, its resolution and the amount of real estate given to the active window. Given these criteria, it's a task in itself to decide on the most suitable dimensions for your pages.

Height isn't much of a problem, as vertical scrolling is taken for granted, but width is an issue, as you don't want content being lost off the right-hand side of your window.



Professional sites such as the BBC has been designed to fit into the expanded browser, which is running in 800x600 resolution

We've looked at the main screen resolutions below and suggested which one might be right for you.



How we calculated

The suggestions shown here for the different browser resolutions have been carefully tested across both Mac and PC platforms. They take into consideration not just the scroll and menu bars found within the browser, but also the Windows Start bar and Microsoft Office bars, should these be visible at the same time as the browser.

SIZING THE BROWSER

640 x 480 pixels is the smallest workable screen resolution that some people – amazingly – still work in. But don't assume you can use these dimensions literally, because scrollbars and browser toolbars demand their own space. If you're designing for these dimensions stick to around 580 pixels wide and 290 high.

800 x 600 is a much more common resolution across the board and most web designers will target their pages for these dimensions. However, bearing in mind the scroll and menu bars it's still best to assume only 740 x 410 pixels as a guideline here.

1024 x 768 is fast becoming the standard resolution, although its still recommended you design for 800 x 600 by default, as this is more likely to be the lowest common denominator. But if you do design for this resolution keep things within 970 x 980, just to be safe.

Elastic tables

In a panic over your layout dimensions? Then consider making use of dynamic table sizing

Elastic tables is a method of creating a page layout that automatically resizes to the browser window and is defined within your HTML authoring software. It relies on you configuring your table attributes using relative percentages to determine the widths, instead of absolute pixel sizes. But not every layout will work with this technique and you'll need to be aware of a few issues before you can begin.

Firstly, if your layout design relies on the kind of closely related integration so often associated with

sliced layouts, then you'll run into problems as your page runs the risk of breaking up as it expands. Instead, you'll need to consider a cleaner design making use of background colours instead of imagery to ensure such problems don't arise.

Similarly, when it comes to further modifying your layout within your web authoring software, you'll need to pay attention to the alignment of content within table cells. As a graphic tool ImageReady cannot configure this for you, but it can help you define the original page.



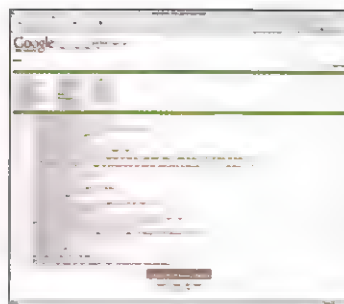
Stretching graphics

It is possible to make use of imagery to fill elastic table cells, although you'll need to make sure they've been embedded into the background first. This will force an image to tile should the dimensions exceed the original image, so make sure you run graphics through the Tile Maker filter first.

KNOW YOUR LIMITS

You'll still need to keep a minimum size in mind

Elastic tables may be a useful way of compensating for larger dimensions, although you'll need to have a good idea of what your minimum page width should be. Without this you risk your layout shrinking to such a degree that the content becomes unreadable. One way of achieving this within your web authoring software is to create an empty row within your table design and position a 1-pixel high transparent .GIF within it. The width of this .GIF determines the minimum width of the browser window. This way, should the viewer attempt to resize the browser window, the .GIF will keep the dimensions at a more realistic level.



Take care with elastic tables and consider how your page layout will appear on extreme monitors

Perfect guide positioning

Define your general layout using guides to help create perfectly consistent columns



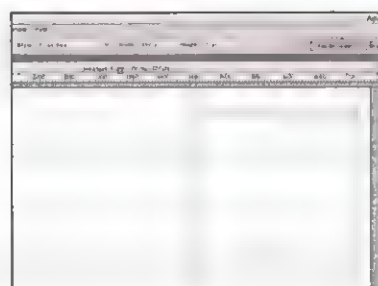
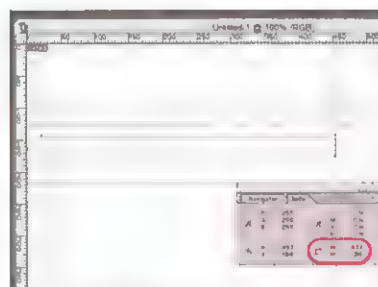
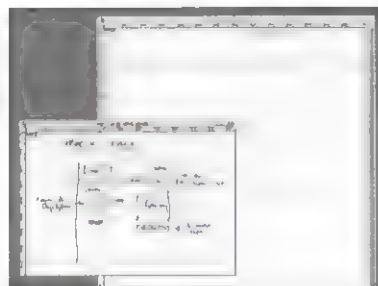
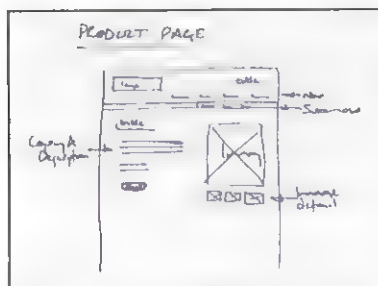
Creating guides

Guides are created by clicking and dragging from the rulers surrounding Photoshop and ImageReady documents. If the rulers aren't visible then you can turn them on via the View menu. It's also worth making sure they're displaying measurement in pixels – double-click a ruler to prompt a dialogue box that will allow you to make changes to this default.



What about the height?

We've concentrated on the widths and not the heights of our table cells due to the fact that we cannot guarantee how much content will be contained within a page. The viewer is used to vertical scrolling and the height dimensions will invariably be determined by graphical content. Sideways scrolling, on the other, is really not acceptable so we need to control the widths.



Before you start any project, whether it's print or web-based, you should spend a little time planning your layout requirements on paper. This will help you visualise how your project will develop, as well as shaping the structure of your page. Once you've decided on this you'll need to consider the browser width and how this will come to influence the row and column dimensions of your page.

Create a new file using the dimensions 740 pixels wide and 1000 high, leaving the resolution set to that of the monitor which is 72dpi. This canvas could form the basis of a page design, but will need a few guides dragged into place first. Using the sketch from the previous step drag guides into position on your page to roughly match those suggested by the original plan.

With the guides roughly in position, make use of the Rectangular Marquee tool to gauge the widths. Drag a selection within the first column and turn to the Info palette to see the actual dimensions. Continue the exercise with the remaining columns, making a note of the data as you go. You can then use this information to round up the dimensions into more manageable values.

To recreate the more accurate column widths we can turn again to the Rectangular Marquee tool. We decided the best dimensions for our layout would be to have columns of 20, 430, 10, 260 and 20 to create a two-column layout with margins and a central gutter. Using these dimensions you can set the selection tool to a fixed size and drag the guides into their new and more accurate positions before continuing.

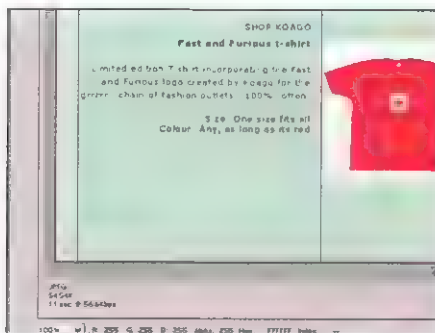
User connection speeds

Keeping your web content lean in terms of file size will ensure it gets to the viewer quicker

The popularity of broadband connectivity is growing fast, but we mustn't ignore users with slower connections.

There's no point designing a cutting edge site if a sizeable proportion of your visitors will get bored waiting for your lavish graphics to download. They will undoubtedly end up hitting the Back button to find an alternative site.

We've listed the main connection speeds below to give you some idea of how fast your graphics will deliver, but as a safe bet we'd still



Tucked away toward the bottom-right of the Preview pane within Photoshop's Save for Web feature is an indicator of the file download time

recommend designing with the 56k modem as the average, keeping page file size down to less than 70kb.



The bigger picture

When we suggest you should try to keep the entire page file size down to less than 70kb, this includes the actual HTML and all the embedded graphics. File sizes in excess of this will download progressively slower the heavier your file content becomes.

TYPICAL CONNECTION SPEEDS

28.8KBPS is the lowest modem speed you should realistically expect to encounter. There are still quite a few casual internet users or owners of older computer systems using this for it to be ignored.

56.6KBPS is the most common speed and one you should treat as the lowest common denominator. Keeping your page file size down to below 70kb will help to ensure users have a smooth experience of your site.

ISDN is an older mid-band technology that offers, on average, twice that of the regular dial-up modem at 128kbps. These users will enjoy a significant improvement to their delivery and can comfortably accept pages of around 140kb without too many problems.

ADSL connection, or broadband, is fast becoming more popular with speeds averaging at around 512kbps. At such speeds users can download media-rich content with virtually no disruption to delivery.



Download times

Both ImageReady and Photoshop, via the Save for Web feature, will give some indication as to how long your layouts will take to deliver using the various connection speeds. Making use of these will provide an early indicator of any potential problems and shouldn't be ignored.

Save for Web masks

Using masks we can further optimise output through Photoshop's Save for Web feature



angel.jpg

Use the *angel.jpg* from the CD to make use of a nicely composed photograph, which would benefit from a mask to define the more important regions and reduce the file size further.



Open the *angel.jpg* file from the CD and notice how the focal point of the image is towards the face, shoulder and bird. The rest of the image is of lesser importance to the picture. Running the Save for Web feature in Photoshop on the image as it stands would result in a file size of around 22kb, but we can bring this down further using channels, without compromising the quality.

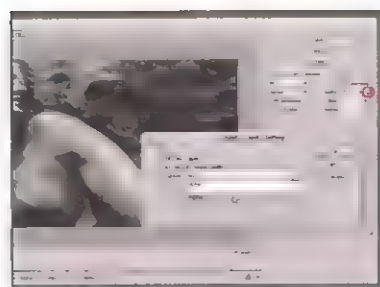


Using the Lasso tool draw a generous selection around the focal area – as we have here – and add some feathering of around 20 pixels. Invert the selection so that only the remainder of the image is selected and turn to the Channels palette. Create a new channel and you'll see that your selection turns into a hidden Alpha channel.



Black or white?

Don't forget that the affected regions within the channel mask appear black in the Channels palette, while white areas will remain unaffected. The feathering was added to smooth the transition between the foreground and background regions.



Access the Save for Web tool via the File menu and configure the image to be saved to the JPG format on a medium setting. Leave the Quality slider as it stands but click on the button to its right to prompt the related dialogue box. From here choose the Alpha 1 channel from the drop-down list as the channel we'll use to modify the Quality setting.



We can now use the Quality slider within the dialogue to adjust the minimum and maximum quality. As the background imagery is already somewhat blurred, we can bring the minimum right down to 0% and the maximum to 5%. OK the settings and save the file as normal, but notice that the file size is almost half that produced by our standard conversion.



Testing your pages

Make sure you're not the only person who can see your pages the way you designed them

Testing is an important stage of any graphic design exercise, but none more so that when you're creating online content. There are many obstacles that can affect the appearance of your layouts, and only time and experience will make you aware of them all. However, the following suggestions should give you a decent headstart.

Although Microsoft Internet Explorer is now by far the most used web browser you mustn't forget alternatives such as Netscape and Opera. View your files through these

browsers as well as earlier versions; going back to the fourth generation should be taken as standard.

Similarly, professional designers will have access to both Macintosh and Windows systems and, although buying a new computer just to test your pages may be a little ambitious, you can always ask a friend who may be on the other side of the fence to check things out for you.

Both Photoshop and ImageReady provide remarkably sturdy code and assets, so any problems you might face will invariably be HTML-based.



Seeing red?

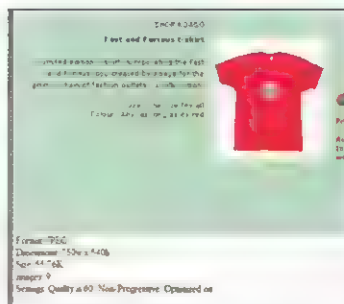
There's a slight inconsistency between the colours rendered on Macintosh and PC systems.

If your designs contain subtle colour nuances you may want to get some idea of how this will appear on other platforms via the View > Proof Setting and choosing the required RGB value.

PREVIEWING YOUR WORK

Get some early indication of any potential problems

ImageReady provides lots of web-specific features to complement the functionality of Photoshop, and you'll also find it has a few advantages over its relation in terms of previewing your web content. The most obvious of these is the inclusion of the Browser Preview button, located on the toolbar. You can also test your pages on browsers other than that defined as your primary application. Use the File > Preview In > Other option to locate an alternative installed browser before you commit to the final export. This will give you a good idea of how successful your conversion has been, as well as an accurate indication of the overall file size.



ImageReady will not only preview your page in various browsers, but also provides details of its file size

Chapter 11

DESIGNING YOUR OWN WEBSITE

In this chapter...

11.1 Introduction
11.2 **planning your site**

11.3 **your page structure**

11.4 **to your page**

11.5 **navigation**

11.6 **HTML format**

Put together a website for presenting your photographs online. First design the layout, then create templates to take things further within your web authoring software

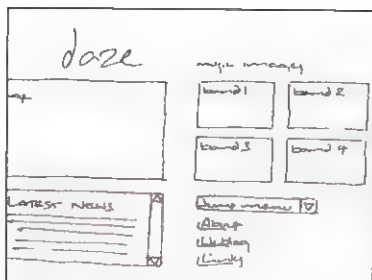
By now, you should be feeling much more confident about your abilities at creating web content, having looked at all the key aspects of both Photoshop and ImageReady.

So what better way of testing your abilities than to design a working site? A basic site needn't be rocket science and can be created relatively easily given your new-found skills. However, you'll need to realise that neither Photoshop nor ImageReady portend to be actual HTML editors. As we've said before, to create a functional collection of pages you'll need to expand your skills further through titles such as Adobe GoLive or Macromedia Dreamweaver.

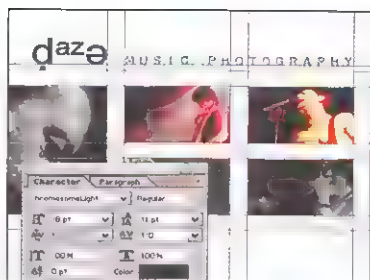
What we can do, however, is to design the various page layouts using the Adobe graphics partnership. These can then be configured and exported into the basic structure of a page, which can act as a template for a basic site to be built around.

Forward planning

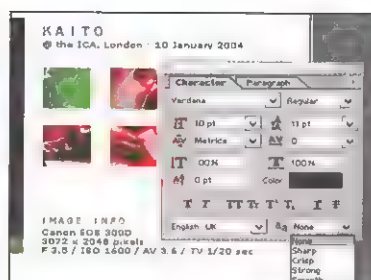
And the following chapter will do just that. Basing the design around a website for a photographer to display their work online, we'll create a number of templates that incorporate many of the skills you've picked up throughout this Focus Guide.



Page 110 Get a good idea of the job in hand before design work really begins



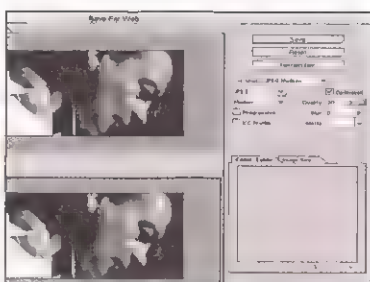
Page 112 Precise asset positioning will create the most efficient layout tables



Page 113 Plan your site's typography by emulating web fonts within Photoshop



Page 114 Defining the layout slices forms the foundation of the HTML table



Page 117 Optimising graphics reduces file size and speeds up your site's delivery



Page 119 Finish the site off using dedicated web authoring software

We'll take things easy and explain the planning process involved when first creating a site. This should help you establish the design using a few tricks of the trade to keep your results consistent, reliable and efficient when converted into working pages. We'll also add a few whistles and bells to make your site even more unique by incorporating rollover buttons, animations and image maps. These extras should take full advantage of your newly developed software skills.

The process should help you hone these new skills further, as well as put them into a more practical context and give you some

understanding of when certain techniques should be used in preference to others.

Getting online

As we've explained, there's only a certain amount that Photoshop and ImageReady can do, but we'll provide a few basic tips at the end that should give you a good idea of how to finalise your site.

You'll also need to get hold of some web space on which to host your site, but that's all you'll need to make your images available to the online world. For the time being look at www.daze.org to see how our site could ultimately be developed.

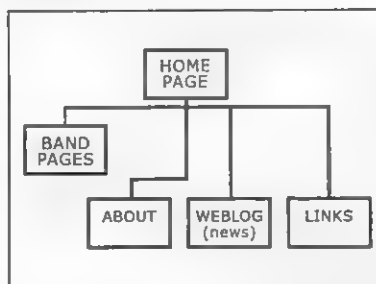
Establishing the site

Before we start pushing pixels, we need to have a clear idea of what our project is about



site_plan.jpg

If the thumbnail images of the page layouts shown here aren't quite clear enough, then take a look at the site_plan.jpg file from the CD. This shows the planned sketches in greater detail, along with some descriptions of how our ideas might take shape with the intended site.



Page content to include:

HOME PAGE

Title
Thumbnails
Band menu
Site navigation
Latest news

BAND PAGE

Title
Band details
Gig information
Thumbnails
Main image
Image info
Navigation



The first step when creating a new site is to decide on your subject and the site structure. Our site is going to be for a music photographer to display their images online, although this can easily be modified to cover any gallery-type site. To keep the project simple we're going to consider a two-level site with a home page leading onto individual pages for each of the featured bands.

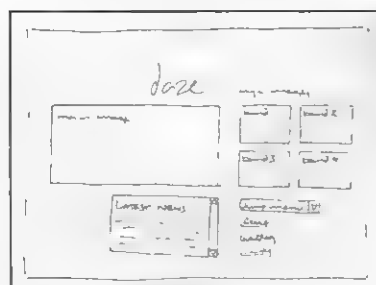


With our basic structure decided we can start to determine the kind of content that key areas of the homepage and the band pages might contain. In this case, we'll need an eye-catching home page that will introduce the site and give a good overview of what the visitor can expect. Then we'll need a page that displays thumbnails and full-size images when these thumbnails are selected.

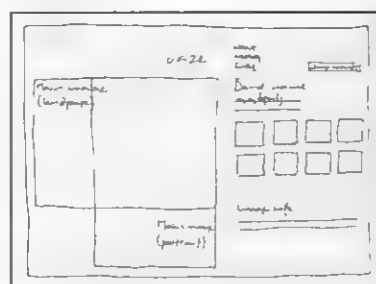


Browser Cache

When a web browser visits a page it automatically makes temporary copies of embedded graphics within a 'cache' held on the user's computer. When the same graphics are used again within other pages the browser will intelligently load such images from the cache rather than requesting them from the server. By recycling your images in this way you can significantly improve the delivery time of your site.



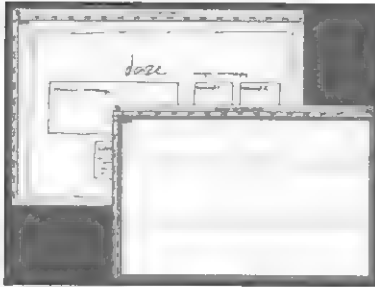
We've created a forward-thinking home page that incorporates a few additional pages and areas that reach beyond the scope of our tutorial – by the time you've completed this chapter you should have enough experience to create these pages yourself. We've settled with the basic layout shown, as it provides key information and tempts users to delve deeper to see the actual imagery.



The image page will be duplicated to cater for the various featured bands, but also for the individual larger images to be displayed. By taking advantage of the user's browser cache we can deliver these pages quickly, because supporting imagery is reused from one page to the next. We've also planned for a drop-down 'jump to' menu that will need to be created within the HTML software.

Establishing the page layout

Before you transfer your sketches to Photoshop we'll need to put down some guides...

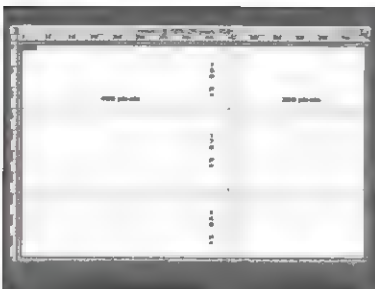


Open the `site_plan.jpg` file and take a moment to familiarise yourself with the home page layout. Create a new file of 750 x 500 pixels with a resolution of 72dpi and a white-filled background. Make sure your canvas rulers are available via **View > Rulers** and start to drag guides roughly into position to mark off the key areas of your layout.

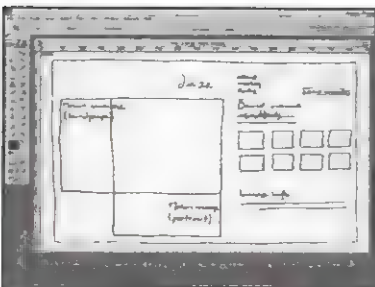


site_plan.jpg

Use the `site_plan.jpg` file to get a clearer idea of how we're planning to lay out the basic structure of our site. This will give you a much better indication than is possible with these screen grabs alone.



Using the techniques we looked at on page 103 use the Rectangular Marquee tool to gauge accurate positioning for your guides, making sure to keep any spaced areas consistent. The dimensions we used are shown here, using gutter spacing of 20 pixels. You can duplicate these or define your own – make use of the Fixed Size style using the same Marquee tool to achieve this.



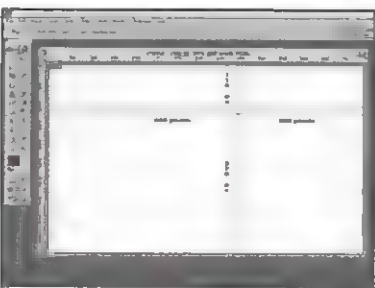
Before you continue, take a look back at the `site_plan.jpg` sketch for the bands page. You'll notice there is a similarity with parts of the home page layout, so duplicate the home page file you've just created with the grids and adapt that slightly leaving the central vertical gutter in place, but adjusting the horizontal guides as required.



Can't snap, won't snap...

Using the Fixed Size trick to position the guides is useful, but there will be occasions when it simply cannot work.

Attempting to position a fixed size selection above or to the left of a guide is impossible, so instead create a temporary layer and fill the selection. You can then snap this shape to the guide and snap the new guide to the opposite side of the shape. Next delete the temporary layer to leave the guides in the perfect position.



We've simplified the layout further, effectively dividing the canvas into four with a 20-pixel gutter between the sections, using a height of 110 pixels for the top row and 370 for the main body. Once you've done this add a simple 20-pixel border around all four sides of both the home and the band page guidelines to keep some breathing space between the page's content and the browser.

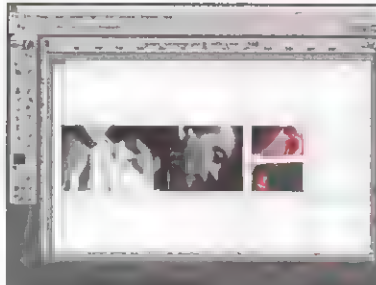
Populating the homepage...

We can now start to put a few of the essential assets in place, prior to the creative process



guides_homepage.psd

Use the file labelled *guides_homepage.psd* if you want to check how your guides for the home page match up with ours at this point – you can choose to either use our file or continue with your own.



Use either your own guides or the *guide_homepage.psd* to continue with the following steps. The most logical place to start is to add imagery to the layout, so use your own or dig out the sample images from the page 112 folder on the CD. To determine the correct dimensions and guides for the thumbnails simply divide the area by two and allow for another 20-pixel gutter.

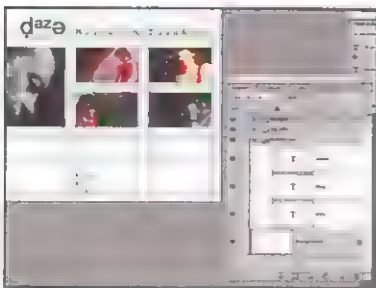


Adding the title text is another simple feature. We chose two contrasting fonts for the name and description and dragged them in place as our initial sketches suggested. Be careful to spot any 'drop characters' (those that fall below the baseline) and manually reposition them above the current guide. Create new ones if necessary to keep other text elements perfectly aligned.



Keep it organised

As your layout begins to grow it makes sense to not only provide logical names for your new layers, but to also group common layers within layer sets. This way you can find your assets much easier, keep your interface a little less cluttered and improve your workflow no end.



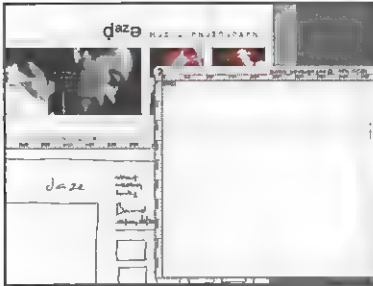
Ignore the scroll box to contain the Latest News and the jump menu for now, as these will be ultimately be created within the web authoring software. What we can do is create a new guide to define the region that will contain the jump menu and add the text labels that will act as navigation buttons to the secondary content pages.



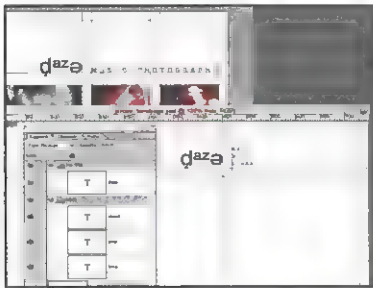
With the essential elements in place now is a good time to review your layout and make any changes to the proposed structure. Hide the guides quickly by using the [Control]+[;] (Windows) or [Command]+[H] (Mac) to get a clearer view of your layout. Save the file before continuing – this ensures that you have a good place to revert back to later if necessary.

...and the content page

We can save time when creating the content page template by reusing existing elements



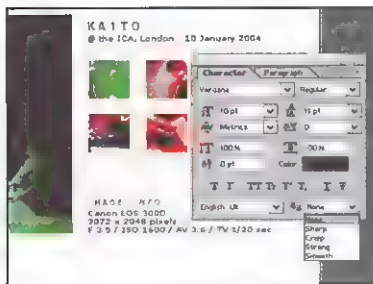
After saving, leave the previous home page layout open and, if possible, open up the sketch layout (site_plan.jpg) to remind yourself of the layout for this new page. Open the empty file containing the guides for the bands page, or use guides_bandpage.psd from the CD. You may need to rearrange the files so you can access them all, but don't worry if you can't see all the files in full.



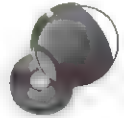
Start by dragging and copying existing elements that we can reuse from the home page. These include the title and navigation, which can be positioned to match the original sketch. Remember to recreate guides to catch any 'drop characters' within the title. Copying such elements to the new file is as simple as dragging and dropping the relevant layer onto the new canvas.



The imagery can be added using the same techniques as on the previous page – this time use those from the page 113 folder on the CD if you don't have your own at hand. Again, we calculated the required size for the thumbnails by using a little basic maths; using dimensions of 50x50 pixels with a 20-pixel space between them to make four thumbnails fill the 260 pixel wide area.



Adding the remaining text labels should be straightforward enough, although a little consideration must be made when emulating text that will ultimately be included as HTML. Use a web-safe font such as Verdana as we have here, and size it to your preferred dimensions. Then set the anti-aliasing to None to emulate the way the text will appear as HTML. Save the file before continuing.



guides_bandpage.psd

Locate the file named guides_bandpage.psd from the CD if you want to make use of the version that we created earlier.



Quick copy

If you've organised your layers into layer sets you can save some time by simply clicking and dragging entire layer sets over to your new canvas. Not only will this duplicate multiple layers at once, but the positional relationship between the individual layers will be retained.

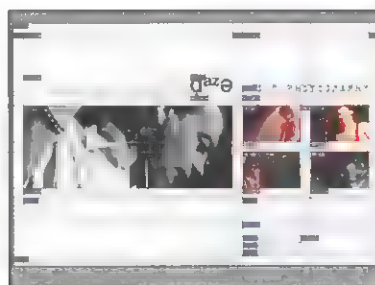
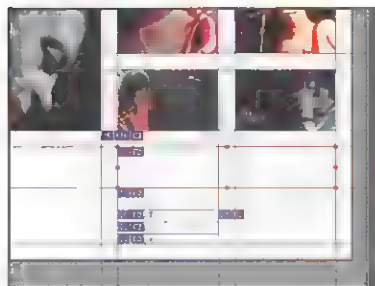
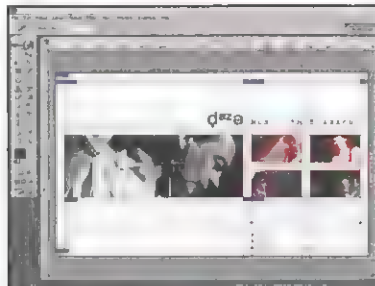
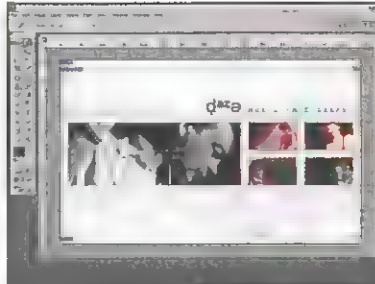
Slicing the layout

The basic design is now complete, so we can determine how we're going to slice things up



114_homepage.psd

You'll need to revert to your homepage layout for this section; although if you prefer to jump in at this point then make use of the 114_homepage.psd file on your CD to continue.



A sound structure

Leave the border slices and the central gutter as user slices; don't turn them into auto slices. This is so we have a clearly defined framework around our final page that will help to recreate the table more reliably and help to position the contained content more accurately.



Return to the home page layout to define the sliced regions. We've kept the design at a minimum so as not to complicate matters, but we'll need to balance graphical content with empty table cells that would be better suited to simple HTML background colours. Start working from the outside in – form a frame around your page by making column and row slices of the empty border.



Next, cut three large rows to incorporate the head content, the images and the lower region. Then, create effectively three columns by slicing each row up to the central column from both the left and right sides of the layout. This should leave three large slices on either side of a central column that's formed by the central gutter.



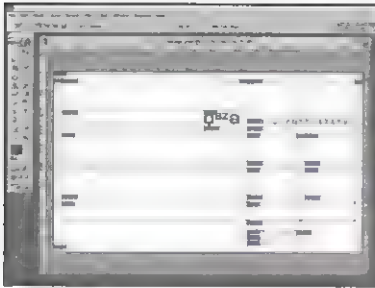
You can now create slices around the site name and description at the head of the page. Then zoom in close to the lower navigation and isolate each of the three entries into their own slices. Also provide sliced areas where the HTML components of the drop menu and the inline frame can appear by referring to our original sketches.



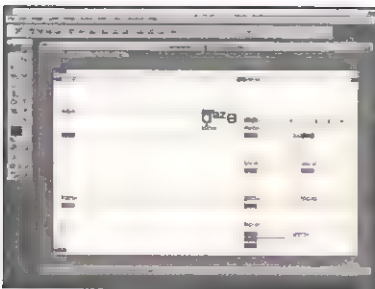
Cut around each of the thumbnails to define these areas as user slices. Once complete, all the page components should be covered. However, to create a more reliable HTML table it's worth going over the empty slices and deleting them. This will convert them back into auto slices and keep the amount of code required to recreate the page to a minimum.

Configure the slices

Decide which areas will be created as graphics and which as efficient HTML background color



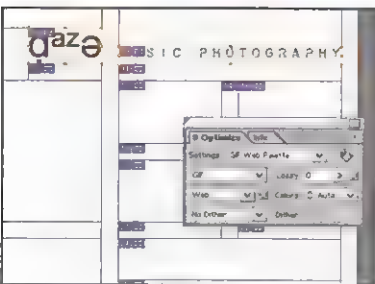
By this point the image should be sliced and ready to configure, but check out the 115_homepage.psd file from the CD to make sure your slices match up. The next step is to make the final page more efficient by configuring empty slices to contain HTML colour rather than actual images. But before we do that, hide the layers that contain the main image and the thumbnails.



It's possible to configure the individual slices within Photoshop, although there are more efficient methods. Transfer the file to ImageReady using the button at the bottom of the toolbar and access the Slice Select tool. Click on all the blank slices while holding down the [Shift] key and you'll notice selected cells change colour to indicate their status.



Leave them selected and dig out the Slice palette, changing the Type field to No Image, unchecking the 'Text is HTML' option and selecting a background (BG) colour of white. To do the same thing within Photoshop would have involved configuring each of the 28 slices individually, so carrying out this trick within ImageReady will save you plenty of time in the long term.



Use the same technique to select the remaining slices containing the site title, description and navigation buttons. Rather than change the Slice attributes, turn instead to the Optimize palette and configure these to the .GIF Web Palette option from the main drop-down, leaving the default configuration alone. Preview the page and you'll see that the total file size for our assets is barely over 6kb.



115_homepage.psd

The number of slices required – even for a simple page like the one we're working on – can be bewildering. But don't panic, you can check out the final sliced version on your bonus CD by digging out 115_homepage.psd.



Why lose the images?

We've hidden all the image content apart from the titles and navigation on this page, as these will be included separately in the final page build. This is so that we can easily replace them as the site is updated without having to recreate the entire page.

Making the navigation rollover

Our site will draw attention to its web links by making them change colour on rollover

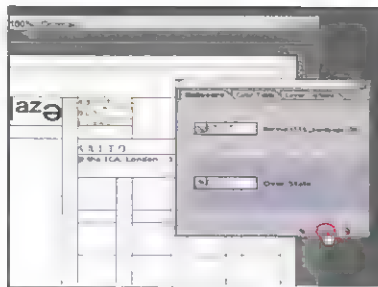


116_bandpage.psd

We've applied the same processes to the band page as the home page from the previous steps, and included the file 116_bandpage.psd on the CD for you to follow.



Run through the previous page again with the band page or use the 116_bandpage.psd file. Take a moment to check out the text slices, as we've embedded the text as HTML through the Slices palette. You might also find it easier to see your sliced content if you change the Sliced Preferences to 'Show Lines Only', as we have here.

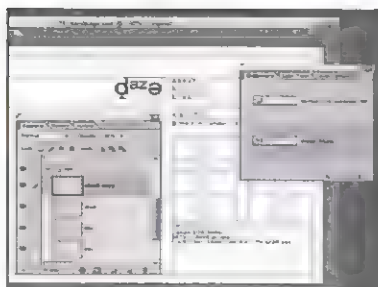


The navigation graphics will benefit from having rollover behaviours. This is a standard feature for links and helps the user identify their purpose. Starting with the About graphic, activate the slice containing the proposed button using the Slice Select tool. Then head over to the Rollovers palette (Window > Rollovers) and click on the 'Create Rollover State' icon at the foot of the palette.

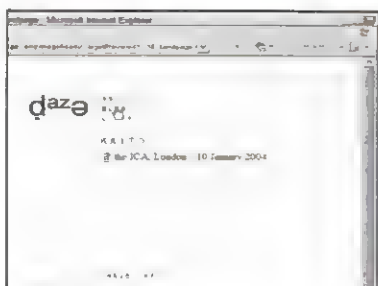


Link location

When you create a rollover graphic you'll ideally need to include a destination for the link. Don't worry if you haven't decided this during the design stage, as ImageReady will automatically insert an empty link that can be amended easily either at a later date or via your web authoring software when you come to use the pages as part of a site.



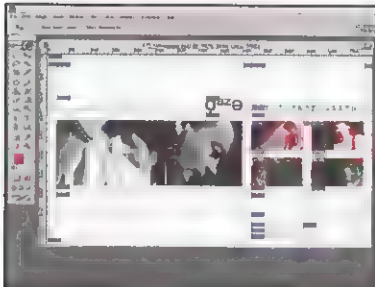
You'll notice this action creates a new layer within the Rollover palette, which contains the Over state of the image. Find the About layer within the Nav layer set and duplicate the layer. Don't edit this any further, but take a look at the Rollovers palette. Where the original and duplicate are visible together, the graphic takes on a slightly stronger look, which is fine as a subtle effect for our rollover.



To complete the effect select the Normal state from the Rollover palette and make sure the duplicate image is hidden, while both are visible for the Over state. Test the page using the Preview button within the ImageReady toolbar and roll your cursor over the graphic to see the effect in action. All you need now is to repeat the process for your Blog and Links graphics before you save the file.

Optimising the images

Time to make our assets that little more efficient, so our final site is the fastest around

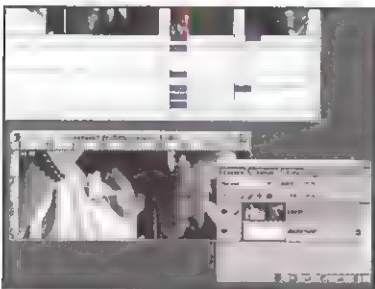


At this point you may be thinking our site is looking a little bare. If you have more time (than we have pages!) you might want to play around with adding more design elements, but if we're going to complete things by the end of this Guide we'll have to start bringing things to a close. Open the 117_homepage.psd file back in Photoshop, as it's time to save the individual graphics.

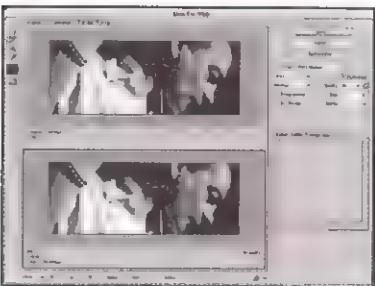


117_homepage.psd

We've created the rollover graphics and updated the homepage PSD file, which you'll find on the CD as 117_homepage.psd. You can use this to continue with the following steps.



Dig out the layer containing the main image and Select > All. Copy the selection and then create a new file via the File menu. The dimensions specified for your new file should automatically match the copied image, so OK the settings and Edit > Paste to create a separate file of the main graphic.

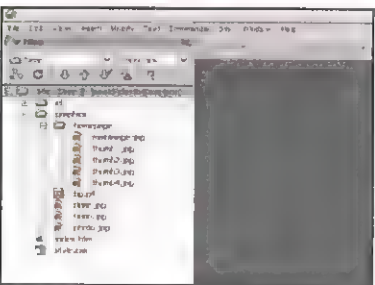


We can now run the isolated graphic through Photoshop's Save for Web feature, found under the File menu. As the image is a photograph and best suited to the JPG format, choose the JPEG Medium option from the Settings drop-down. Check out the 2-Up view and you'll see how the image has reduced from 214kb to a more efficient 8kb.



Why bother?

Although we could have left the images in place and exported the final page, it's important you understand how to take images out of a larger design. When it comes round to updating the page to include new images it is much easier just to replace the images rather than go through the process of configuring your entire page.



Save the file in a folder named Graphics that sits inside the folder that will ultimately contain the final site, and repeat the process for the remaining thumbnails. You can also run through the process using the images contained within the band page layout if you like – saving these to a logically named sub-directory of the Graphics folder will make them easier to find using web building software.

Putting the pages together

With assets created, here's how Dreamweaver might be used to create the final page...



HTML or HTML?

There may be some confusion when you save web pages via Photoshop or ImageReady, as both titles will default to using the HTML extension for a web page. Your web authoring software may prefer the more common and shorter HTML extension, but you can safely change this one way or the other quite freely, as they are effectively one and the same. The browser will understand both without any difficulty.

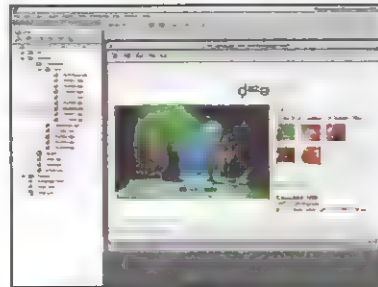


Templates

We concentrated on creating the home page as a unique page, while our band page could be reused to contain different content. Applications such as Dreamweaver and GoLive have support for templates, which make updating your site even easier – if elements such as the jump menu are embedded within a Dreamweaver template, for example, you'll be able to change just the template to automatically update any of its reliant pages.



Now that the basic page is complete we can export the file to create the HTML page and associated graphics. To do this in ImageReady we click on File > 'Save Optimised As' and enter a logical file name before locating a suitable location within the folder that contains our site. The 'HTML and Images' option is selected from the 'Save As Type' field and the Save button is pressed to allow ImageReady to convert the file.



The file is then available for us to open within some web authoring software such as Macromedia Dreamweaver (or GoLive, see demo on your CD) to continue creating the specific web content that's beyond the scope of Photoshop and ImageReady. Using the images we optimised previously we can bring these into play by referencing them from the relevant table cells, for example.



You may have been wondering how to format the text within our page. This is something that can only be *emulated* within Photoshop or ImageReady. We could embed HTML and format the text through the tag, but this is outdated. Within your web authoring environment you can attach a Cascading Style Sheet to automatically take care of any HTML text elements in one click.



Even the insertion of something that may appear quite complex, such as our 'jump menu' is made simpler using dedicated web software. Learning how to use your chosen web authoring program may prove to be another hurdle to overcome, but at least Photoshop and ImageReady have got you off to a running start.

The end results

You've finally reached the point where you can save the final page and view it in the browser

Well it's been a long trek but you should now have a much clearer idea of how to design and create your own website using Photoshop and ImageReady. Using these tools the whole process is much simplified, as we've discovered. A fundamental page is created, which can then be taken into more dedicated web authoring software to have the finishing touches applied.

You can check out the final site that we've created here at www.daze.org, or you can view the



The final content page when viewed through the browser has a clean appearance that hides the complex table that we created

pages in their finished HTML form by opening up the `pages_final` folder on your bonus CD.



page_final

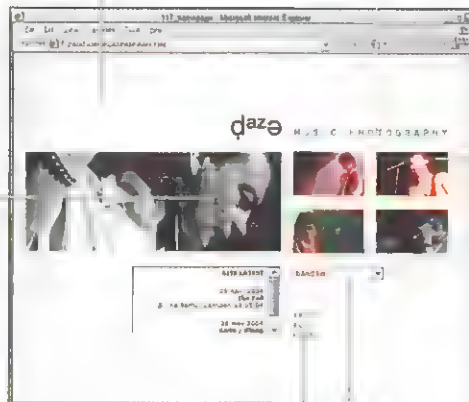
Open up the `page_final` on the CD and check out the `index.htm` to see how the home page might look within the browser. The links won't take you anywhere, but if you want to see the final site then head over to www.daze.org and see how the designs we've started here could be developed further.

THE HTML HOME PAGE

The actual HTML table layout remains invisible, but holds the entire page together and provides a structure in which the content is placed.

Variable imagery was run through the Photoshop Save for Web feature and can be easily changed on our final page.

Subtle rollovers images were created from the site navigation graphics to help highlight their function.



Regular site graphics were embedded into the page layout, with optimisation settings configured directly within ImageReady prior to export.

The thumbnail images can be turned easily into links either through ImageReady or through dedicated web authoring software.

We left adequate space within the design for additional elements such as the jump menu and the inline frame, which cannot be created within Photoshop or ImageReady.

On your CD-ROM

Here's how to get the most from the disc that accompanies your Focus Guide

Featured resources

- Exclusive QuickStart video lessons
- A collection of professional web page templates
- Adobe GoLive CS trial version
- All the tutorial files mentioned within the Focus Guide

To access the resources and files on this disc, including the huge collection of fonts and exclusive video tutorials, first insert the CD into your drive. Whether you're using a Mac or a Windows PC, the disc will work equally well. If the disc interface doesn't run automatically, look at the opposite page to find out how to start your installation manually.

Before you go on

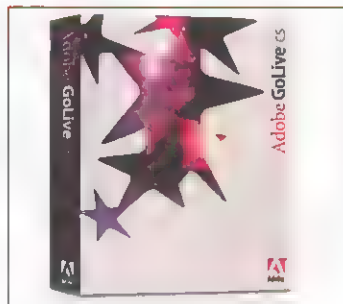
The first item that should appear on your screen is the disclaimer

window; here you'll need to click on 'I Accept'. Please remember that this disc has been scanned and tested at all stages of production, but – as with all new software – we still recommend that you run a virus checker before use. We also recommend that you have an up-to-date backup of your hard disk before using this disc. Future Publishing does not accept responsibility for any disruption, damage and/or loss to your data or computer system that may occur while using this disc, or the data and programs on it. Please

ADOBE GOLIVE CS (TRIAL VERSION)

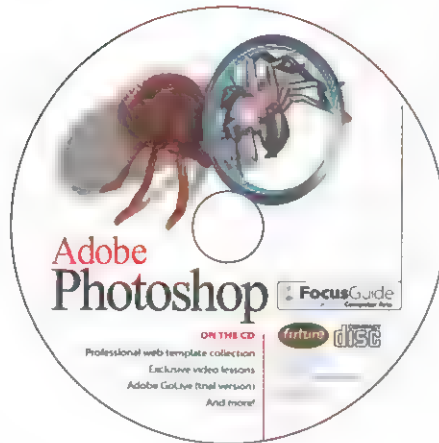
Try the latest version of GoLive

Adobe GoLive CS software delivers everything you need to create professional websites. It not only works seamlessly alongside Adobe Photoshop, but also with Adobe Illustrator, and Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) files directly within GoLive. This means that there's no need to switch between various applications. The software helps you to maximise your productivity with a creative Web design environment that you can customise to suit your style. It is now easier to design without compromise using powerful tools that support industry standards. The trial version on your CD will work without limitations for 30 days.



Adobe's all-new version of the popular web editing package is compatible with other Creative Suite products

www.adobe.com/products/golive/main.html



consult your network administrator before attempting to install any software on a networked PC.

Installation

Once your CD interface has loaded, you can access any of the files, software and other resources included directly from your CD. Simply click on the animated 'Click' link and choose the section that you're interested in from the menu. Our video tutorials require the latest QuickTime Player, from www.apple.com/quicktime/download.

If you have a query about your disc, email our support team at (support@futurenet.co.uk) for help. If you want to talk to a member of the team, call 01225 822743. Note that we can only provide basic advice on using the disc interface and installing the supplied software. We cannot give in-depth help on specific programs, or on your particular system configuration.



Starting your installation manually

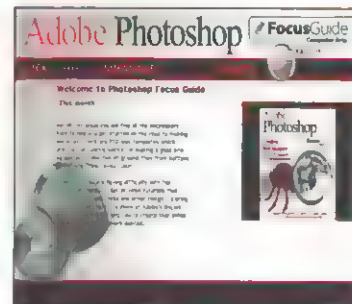
PC users: click on the Windows Start button and click Run. Then click Browse and go to the CD directory in My Computer. Look for a file called PFGI.exe and double-click it. Then click OK in the Run dialogue, and the CD should then load up.
Mac users: Double-click the disc icon, then double-click StartMAC or StartOSX, depending on which OS you're using.

TUTORIAL FILES

Access files that will help you throughout this Focus Guide

As you progress through this Focus Guide you'll often notice a disc symbol in your sidebar, letting you know that a relevant file is available on your cover CD. We've made it easier than ever to access these files from our new-look disc interface. Simply click on the animated Click icon, then select Tutorials > Tutorial Files and click on the 'Open Tutorial Files' link.

This should take you directly to the folder that contains all the files that we've mentioned in the course of this Focus Guide. These will give you an ideal starting point for our walkthroughs, and – in the unlikely event that you get stuck – will show you how your images should be looking.



You can now navigate to all the files that we've mentioned in the Guide directly from your disc interface

QuickTime video lessons

The fastest and easiest way to learn is to sit back and watch an expert explain it all

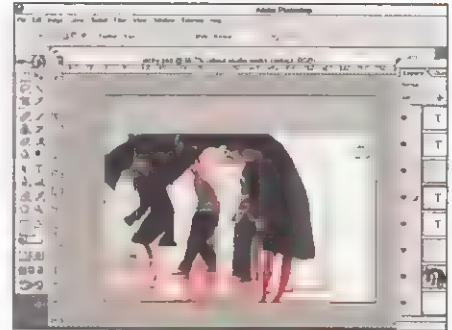


Chris Schmidt

This month's video tutorials have been put together by Chris Schmidt, who also wrote the main body of this issue. Chris is a professional web designer and a regular contributor to magazines such as *Computer Arts* and *net*.

We've had a great response to our series of QuickTime video lessons, and this month's instalment won't disappoint! George Cairns has stepped aside for this issue to make way for our author and web specialist, Chris Schmidt.

If you're a Photoshop and ImageReady beginner Chris's video lessons are the ideal place to start. Watch and learn as he talks you through the process of slicing your images and compressing them further with Photoshop's Save For Web feature. In the last part of the



In our handy QuickTime tutorials, web expert Chris Schmidt provides information on how to use Photoshop to create web-ready graphics

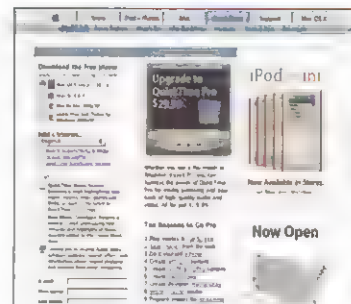
lesson you'll even learn how to get started with your free Web templates. More about these on the next page...

VIEWING YOUR VIDEO TUTORIALS

How to open up your QuickTime video lessons

We've had several queries from readers who have struggled to gain access to the video tutorials on the disc, but hopefully our new-look disc interface will make things much easier. To start up your videos, first click on the animated 'Click' link, then choose **Tutorials > Video Tutorials** and click on 'Open Video Tutorials Folder'. This gives you direct access to the folder that contains your QuickTime files.

To view the files you'll need to have the latest version of the QuickTime Player installed. If you don't already have it, you can download it for free from the QuickTime website. Then double-click the files to see Chris Schmidt in action.



A visit to the QuickTime website will equip you with everything you need to view our video lessons. And it's free!

www.apple.com/quicktime/download

Superb web template collection

Dozens of templates and graphics from Seder Graphics and Layout Galaxy

Throughout this Focus Guide we've given you more than enough food for thought as to how you can put together your own designs and layouts as you start to build your own bespoke website. However, you may benefit further from seeing first-hand how professional designers put together such complex layered documents.

We've been provided with a collection of layouts by two companies: Seder Graphics and Layout Galaxy. These companies specialise in creating generic page

templates for more experienced Photoshop users to adapt to their own websites. Layout Galaxy have also thrown in a number of buttons, icons and other useful elements that will add sparkle to any site.

Open up your templates from the CD and you'll see exactly how they have made use of guides, slices, masks, layers and more to create some stunning professional layouts. By pulling these templates apart you'll inevitably find some new techniques that you can apply to your own work.



Missing fonts

When you load up some of these templates be prepared to see error messages warning you of missing fonts. This will happen if a particular design makes use of a font that isn't installed on your system. The alert will give you the chance to substitute the missing font, or you could always go online and download the original.

SEDER GRAPHICS

So who are Seder Graphics anyway?

Seder Graphics have provided us with 20 great page templates. They boast a client portfolio ranging from small businesses to the US Navy, but it's their template designs that have put them on the map. With their fourth CD now released, their templates support not only Photoshop but also Fireworks and Flash, and there are Dreamweaver templates currently being developed, which means you can develop your skills across various applications. If the free samples on the CD have inspired you, then why not head over to their site for more information. Or simply turn the page to see how to make use of their superb templates.



More information on Seder Graphic's services is available through via website. See below for the address

www.sedergraphics.com

Using professional templates

Open a sample template and familiarise yourself with the way these files are organised



hostingIT.psd

Dig out the hostingIT.psd template from the Seder Graphics folder on your CD and we'll explain over the following steps what you can expect to find in your free templates.



1 Open the hostingIT.psd file for a typical Photoshop template that could be used as an interface for a web hosting company. The strength behind such templates is that you have access to the layers used to create the layout. Look at the Layers palette and take a moment to familiarise yourself with the individual components available.

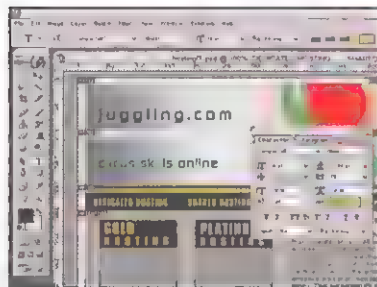


2 You can easily find, for example, where the heading graphic is located so if you choose to add your own imagery to the layout this becomes as simple as sourcing a replacement graphic and scaling to size before dragging it into the layer stack. You may need to hide the original graphic and carry out a little modification to the new one, but already half the job is done.

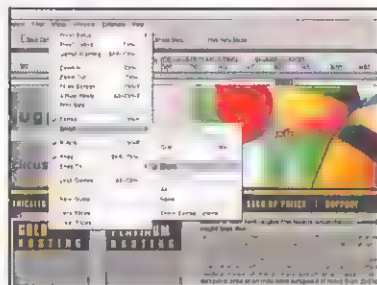


Recolouring graphics

If you like the general layout of a particular design but feel the colours aren't suitable, you can easily change these details by locating the relevant layer and checking the lock transparency option within the Layers palette. If you now fill the entire layer with your preferred hue you'll find only the existing pixels will be coloured.



3 Similarly, changing the text is a simple process, as the text layers remain fully editable. All that's necessary is for you to select the text as you would normally and replace the content. You may experience an error message if fonts used by default aren't on your system, but you can easily replace these via the Character palette.

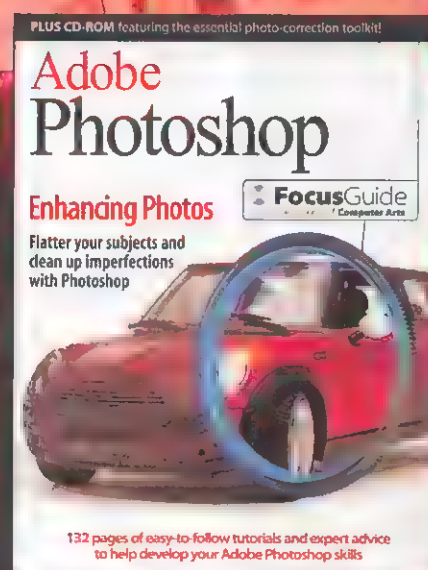
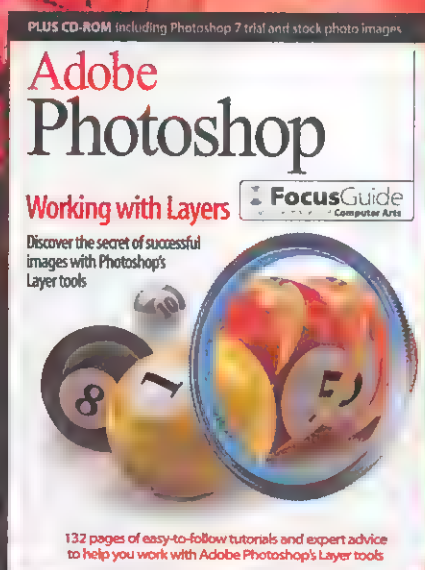


4 And once you've completed any changes and added your own content, you can revise any existing guides or slices to suit your end results. Just make sure the View > Extras option is checked as well as the View > Show > Slices option, and you'll be able to manipulate such existing elements using the Slice Select tool prior to exporting and saving your new page.

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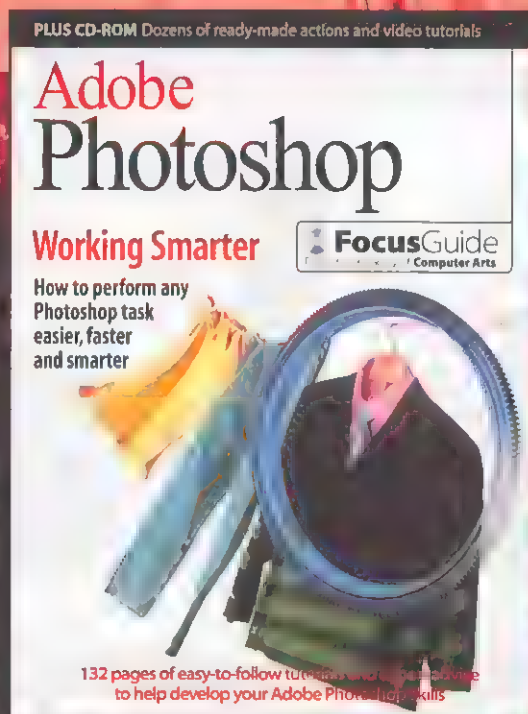


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ISSUE 11 ON SALE 3 JUNE

Glossary

Don't let jargon slow you down. Here's our handy guide to essential terms found in this Focus Guide

Anti-aliasing

Moving pixels around can cause undesirable jagged edges to appear, where edited pixels have not blended smoothly together. Anti-aliasing refers to the process of smoothing out these jagged edges for a more natural look.

Blending modes

You use blending modes to determine how the pixels in a layer are blended with underlying pixels on other layers. By applying specific blend modes to individual layers, you can create a wide variety of special effects.

Brush

Brushes enable you to paint on Photoshop images with colour, other bits of images and pre-defined patterns. They mimic real brushes in that you can alter the size, hardness and texture in order to achieve the effects you want.

Colour channel

There are three colour channels in all colour images: red, green and blue. Each one contains information specific to that colour. Photoshop enables you to alter each channel independently, making it possible to reduce grainy blue skies without affecting the rest of an image, for example.

Filter

A filter is a preset tool within Photoshop, which applies an effect to an image (or a selection within the image). Some filters apply their effect in one click, while others offer more complex settings. Filter categories include Sharpen, Blur, Artistic and Stylize. Each of these offer further options via

fly-out menus. For a complete list click in the Filter menu.

.GIF (or .gif)

A type of image file format best suited for producing simple images for the web. Examples include logos, banners, buttons and anything made up of only a few flat colours.

Greyscale

An image is greyscale if it contains no colour information. Almost all digital camera files, for instance, will be in colour. But you can turn them into black and white with many fine gradations of grey, from within Photoshop by turning them into greyscale images.

Image size

This refers to the physical size of an image. For instance, a photograph you are working on may be 20x15cm. This matters most when you come to printing out the image.

.JPG (or .jpeg)

A type of image file format that gives a desirable combination of small file sizes and good quality photo reproduction. It is commonly used in digital cameras to store the images that you take. The small file sizes also make it ideal for the web.

Layer

Layers containing effects or elements of images can be stacked on top of the original image layer (the background) in order to change the appearance of the image. Layers do not directly affect the layers beneath them, in the same way that a blurry piece of glass placed over a photograph does not actually affect the photograph

– in both cases, it is the appearance that is changed, leaving the original untouched.

Marquee

The flashing dotted outline that surrounds a selection. You'll also see it referred to in some places as 'marching ants'.

Rasterize

When you 'rasterize' a graphical element, you convert it from a vector to a pixel-based image. It will no longer be scalable like a vector, but can still be edited like other images in Photoshop.

Resolution

A measure of how many pixels make up an image. A resolution of 300dpi (dots per inch) is recognised as the minimum if you're intending to print your images. 72dpi is sufficient for images intended for the web.

Selection

Any part of an image which you select with Photoshop's tools, shown by a marquee around it. You can then work on certain parts of an image, or remove them without affecting the rest.

Thumbnail

A small, 'thumbnail-sized' version of an image. You'll find them in folders of images and in Photoshop's File Browser. Because they're smaller than a full size image you can browse through them more quickly, which makes finding the file you're after far easier.

Pixel

An abbreviation for 'picture element', it is essentially a tiny dot of colour on screen. Most images are made of up millions of pixels, which

combine to make an image look seamless. Zoom in very close on an image, however, or enlarge it to a high degree, and you can clearly see these individual pixels.

Plug-in

An piece of software that adds extra features to Photoshop – usually under the Filters menu. Plug-ins cannot work independently of Photoshop; they need to be added to Photoshop's 'plug-ins' folder before they will work. Often called 'third party' plug-ins, because they are developed by companies other than Adobe.

PSD

Photoshop's own file format, which preserves elements such as layers and channels. If you're editing an image file, it's sensible to save it as a PSD, in order for the changes you have made to remain editable when you next open it.

Tool options bar

When a tool is selected, the corresponding tool options bar automatically appears at the top of the Photoshop window, giving you access to various options relating to the tool, often including such things as Anti-aliasing and Feathering.

Vector

A 'vector' is a type of graphical element. In Photoshop graphics are usually 'pixel-based', which means they are difficult to manipulate without adversely affecting their image quality. The advantage of vectors is that they are 'resolution independent', so can be scaled up and down, and resized without loss of quality.

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